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I.

OUGHT THE NEGRO TO BE DISFRANCHISED? OUGHT HE TO HAVE BEEN ENFRANCHISED?

JAMES G. BLAINE.
L. Q. C. LAMAR.
WADE HAMPTON.

JAMES A. GARFIELD. .
ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.
WENDELL PHILLIPS.

MONTGOMERY BLAIR.
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Conclusion—JAMES G. BLAINE.

MR. BLAINE.

THESE questions have lately been asked by many who have been distinguished as the special champions of the negro's rights ; by many who have devoted their lives to redressing the negro's wrongs. The questions owe their origin not to any cooling of philanthropic interest, not to any novel or radical views about universal suffrage, but to the fact that, in the judgment of many of those hitherto accounted wisest, negro suffrage has failed to attain the ends hoped for when the franchise was conferred ; failed as a means of more completely securing the negro's civil rights ; failed to bring him the consideration which generally attaches to power ; failed, indeed, to achieve anything except to increase the political weight and influence of those against whom, and in spite of whom, his enfranchisement was secured.

Those who have reached this conclusion, and those who are tending toward it, argue that the important franchise was prematurely bestowed on the negro ; that its possession necessarily places him

in inharmonious relations with the white race ; that the excitement incident to its free enjoyment hinders him from progress in the rudimentary and essential branches of education ; that his advance in material wealth is thus delayed and obstructed ; and that obstacles, which would not otherwise exist, are continually accumulating in his path—rendering his progress impossible and his oppression inevitable. In other words, that suffrage in the hands of the negro is a challenge to the white race for a contest in which he is sure to be overmatched ; and that the withdrawal of the franchise would remove all conflict, restore kindly relations between the races, place the whites on their proper and honorable responsibility, and assure to each race the largest prosperity attainable under a Government where both are compelled to live.

The class of men whose views are thus hastily summarized do not contemplate the withdrawal of the suffrage from the negro without a corresponding reduction in the representation in Congress of the States where the negro is a large factor in the apportionment. And yet it is quite probable that they have not given thought to the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of compassing that end. Under the Constitution, as it is now construed, the diminution of representative strength could only result from the States passing such laws as would disfranchise the negro by some educational or property test, as it is forbidden by the fifteenth amendment to disfranchise him on account of his race. But no Southern State will do this, and for two reasons : first, they will in no event consent to a reduction of representative strength ; and, second, they could not make any disfranchisement of the negro that would not at the same time disfranchise an immense number of whites.

Quite another class—mostly resident in the South, but with numerous sympathizers in the North—would be glad to have the negro disfranchised on totally different grounds. Born and reared with the belief that the negro is inferior to the white man in everything, it is hard for the class who were masters at the South to endure any phase or form of equality on the part of the negro. Instinct governs reason, and with the mass of Southern people the aversion to equality is instinctive and ineradicable. The general conclusion with this class would be to deprive the negro of voting if it could be done without impairing the representation of their States, but not to make any move in that direction so long as diminished power in Congress is the constitutional and logical result of a denial or abridgment of suffrage. In the mean while, seeing no

mode of legally or equitably depriving the negro of his suffrage except with unwelcome penalty to themselves, the Southern States as a whole—differing in degree but the same in effect—have striven to achieve by indirect and unlawful means what they can not achieve directly and lawfully. They have so far as possible made negro suffrage of none effect. They have done this against law and against justice.

Having stated the position of both classes on this question, I venture now to give my own views in a series of statements in which I shall endeavor to embody both argument and conclusion :

First. The two classes I have named, contemplating the possible or desirable disfranchisement of the negro from entirely different standpoints, and with entirely different aims, are both and equally in the wrong. The first is radically in error in supposing that a disfranchisement of the negro would put him in the way of any development or progress that would in time fit him for the suffrage. He would instead grow more and more unfit for it every day from the time the first backward step should be taken, and he would relapse, if not into actual chattel slavery, yet into such a dependent and defenseless condition as would result in only another form of servitude. For the ballot to-day, imperfectly enjoyed as it is by the negro, its freedom unjustly and illegally curtailed, its independence ruthlessly marred, its purity defiled, is withal and after all the strong shield the race has against a form of servitude which would have all the cruelty and none of the alleviations of the old slave system, whose destruction carried with it the shedding of so much innocent blood.

—The second class is wrong in anticipating even the remote possibility of securing the legal disfranchisement of the negro without a reduction of representation. Both sides have fenced for position on this question. But for the clause regulating representation in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution we should to-day have the South wholly under the control, and legally under the control, of those who rebelled against the Union and sought to erect the Confederate Government—enjoying full representation by reason of the negroes being counted in the apportionment without a pretense of suffrage being conceded to the race. The Fourteenth Amendment was designed to prevent this, and, if it does not succeed in preventing it, it is because of evasion and violation of its express provisions and of its clear intent. Those who erected the Confed-

erate Government may be in exclusive possession of power throughout the South, but they are not so fairly and legally ; and they will not be permitted to continue in the enjoyment of political power unjustly seized—and seized in derogation and in defiance of the rights not merely of the negro but of the whites in all other sections of the country. Injustice cannot stand before exposure and argument and the force of public opinion ; and no more severe weapons of defense will be required against the wrong which now afflicts the South and is a scandal to the whole country.

Second. But, while discussing the question of the disfranchisement of the negro, and settling its justice or expediency according to our discretion, it may be worth while to look at its impracticability, or, to state it still more strongly, its impossibility. Logicians attach weight to arguments drawn *ab inconvenienti*. Arguments must be still more cogent, and conclusions still more decisive, when drawn *ab impossibili*. The negro is secure against disfranchisement by two constitutional amendments, and he can not be remanded to the non-voting class until both these amendments are annulled. And these amendments can not be annulled until two thirds of the Senate and two thirds of the House of Representatives of the United States shall propose, and a majority in the Legislatures or conventions of twenty-nine States shall by affirmative vote approve, the annulment. In other words, the negro can not be disfranchised so long as one vote more than one third in the United States Senate, or one vote more than one third in the House of Representatives, shall be recorded against it ; and if these securities and safeguards should give way, then the disfranchisement could not be effected so long as a majority in one branch in the Legislatures of only ten States should refuse to assent to it, and refuse to assent to a convention to which it might be referred. No human right on this continent is more completely guaranteed than the right against disfranchisement on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, as embodied in the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Third. In enforcement and elucidation of my second point, it is of interest to observe the rapid advance and development of popular sentiment in regard to the rights of the negro as expressed in the last three amendments to the Constitution of the United States. In 1865 Congress submitted the Thirteenth Amendment, which merely gave the negro freedom, without suffrage, civil rights, or citizenship. In 1866 the Fourteenth Amendment was submitted, declaring

the negro to be a citizen, but not forbidding the States to withhold suffrage from him—yet inducing them to grant it by the provision that representation in Congress should be reduced in proportion to the exclusion of male citizens twenty-one years of age from the right to vote, except for rebellion or other crime. In 1869 the decisive step was taken of declaring that “the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” A most important provision in this amendment is the inhibition upon the “United States” as well as upon “any State”; for it would not be among the impossible results of a great political revolution, resting on prejudice and grasping for power, that, in the absence of this express negation, the United States might assume or usurp the right to deprive the negro of suffrage, and then the States would not be subjected to the forfeiture of representation provided in the Fourteenth Amendment as the result of the denial or abridgment of suffrage by State authority.—In this stately progression of organic enactments the will of a great people is embodied, and its reversal would be one of those revolutions which would convulse social order and endanger the authority of law. There will be no step backward, but under the provision which specifically confers on Congress the power to enforce each amendment by “appropriate legislation” there will be applied, from time to time, fitfully perhaps and yet certainly, the restraining and correcting edicts of national authority.

Fourth. As I have already hinted, there will be no attempt made in the Southern States to disfranchise the negro by any of those methods which would still be within the power of the State. There is no Southern State that would dare venture on an educational qualification, because by the last census there were more than one million white persons over fifteen years of age, in the States lately slaveholding, who could not read a word, and a still larger number who could not write their names. There was, of course, a still greater number of negroes of the same ages who could not read or write; but, in the nine years that have intervened since the census was taken, there has been a much greater advance in the education of the negroes than in the education of the poor whites of the South; and to-day on an educational qualification it is quite probable that, while the proportion would be in favor of the whites, the absolute exclusion of the whites in some of the States would be nearly as great as that of the negroes. Nor would a property test operate

with any greater advantage to the whites. The slave States always had a large class of very poor and entirely uneducated whites, and any qualification of property that would seriously diminish the negro vote would also cut off a very large number of whites from the suffrage.

Thus far I have directed my argument to the first question propounded, "Ought the negro to be disfranchised?" The second interrogatory, "Ought he to have been enfranchised?" is not practical but speculative; and yet, unless it can be answered with confidence in the affirmative, the moral tenure of his suffrage is weakened, and, as a consequence, his legal right to enjoy it is impaired. For myself I answer the second question in the affirmative, with as little hesitation as I answered the first in the negative. And, if the question were again submitted to the judgment of Congress, I would vote for suffrage in the light of experience with more confidence than I voted for it in the light of an experiment. Had the franchise not been bestowed upon the negro as his shield and weapon of defense, the demand upon the General Government to interfere for his protection would have been constant and irritating and embarrassing. Great complaint has been made for years past of the Government's interference, simply to secure to the colored citizen his plainest constitutional right. But this intervention has been trifling compared to that which would have been required if we had not given suffrage to the negro. In the Reconstruction experiments under President Johnson's plan, before the negro was enfranchised, it was clearly foreshadowed that he was to be dealt with as one having no rights except such as the whites should choose to grant. The negro was to work according to labor laws; freedom of movement and transit was to be denied him by the operation of vagrant laws; liberty to sell his time and his skill at their market value was to be restrained by apprentice laws; and the slavery that was abolished by the Constitution of a nation was to be revived by the enactment of a State. To counteract these and all like efforts at reënslavement, the national authority would have been constantly invoked; interference in the most positive and peremptory manner would have been demanded, and angry conflict and possibly resistance to law would have resulted. The one sure mode to remand the States that rebelled against the Union to their autonomy was to give suffrage to the negro; and that autonomy will be complete, absolute and unquestioned whenever the rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic shall be enjoyed in every State

—as the administration of justice was assured in *Magna Charta* —“promptly and without delay ; freely and without sale ; completely and without denial.”

JAMES G. BLAINE.

MR. LAMAR.

THE precision with which Mr. Blaine states his premises and the unimpassioned spirit in which he draws his conclusions render the discussion which he proposes both possible and profitable. His statement itself deprives the issue of nearly all its difficulty and danger. He lays down with force and clearness his propositions :

1. That the disfranchisement of the negro is a political impossibility under any circumstances short of revolution.

2. That the ballot in the hands of the negro, however its exercise may have been embarrassed and diminished by what he considers, erroneously, a general Southern policy, has been to that race a means of defense and an element of progress.

I agree to both propositions. In all my experience of Southern opinion I know no Southern man of influence or consideration who believes that the disfranchisement of the negro on account of race, color, or former condition of servitude, is a political possibility. I am not now discussing the propriety or wisdom of universal suffrage, or whether in the interests of wise, safe, and orderly government all suffrage ought not to be qualified. What I mean to say is, that universal suffrage being given as the condition of our political life, the negro once made a citizen cannot be placed under any other condition. And in this connection it may surprise some of the readers of this discussion to learn that in 1869 the white people of Mississippi unanimously voted at the polls in favor of ratifying the enfranchising amendment for which Mr. Blaine voted in Congress—believing, as they did, that when once the negro was made a free man, a property-holder, and a tax-payer, he could not be excluded from the remaining privilege and duty of a citizen, the right and obligation to vote. And I think I can safely say for that people what Mr. Blaine says for himself, that, if the question were again submitted to their judgment, they “would vote for negro suffrage in the light of experience with more confidence than they voted for it in the light of an experiment.”

I concur also in the second proposition, that the ballot has been in the hands of the negro both a defense and an education ; and I

am glad to find this important truth recognized so fully by Mr. Blaine. We might possibly differ as to the extent to which the defense was needed, or as to the progress which has been made in the education. But enough would remain for substantial agreement. There can be no doubt that in the unaccustomed relation into which the white and colored people of the South were suddenly forced, there would have been a natural tendency on the part of the former masters, still in possession of the land and of the intelligence of the country, and of its legislative power, to use an almost absolute authority and to develop the new freedman according to their own idea of what was good for him. This would have resulted in a race distinction, with such incidents of the old system as would have discontented the negro and dissatisfied the general opinion and sentiment of the country. If slavery was to be abolished, it must, I think, be admitted that there could be nothing short of complete abolition, free from any of the affinities of slavery ; and this would not have been effected so long as there existed any inequality before the law. The ballot was, therefore, a protection of the negro against any such condition, and enabled him to force his interests upon the legislative consideration of the South.

What I do not think Mr. Blaine fully realizes, or makes due allowance for, is that this sudden transformation, social and political, would necessarily produce some jar in its practical operation, and that its successful working could be effected only by experienced and conscientious men acting on both sides with good sense and good temper. Conquest on either side only complicated the problem. Its only solution was a sagacious and kindly coöperation of all the social forces. The vote in the hands of the negro should have been genuinely "a defense," not a weapon of attack.

The proper use of this defensive power, and its growth into a means of wholesome and positive influence upon the character and interests of the country, could only be attained by the education of the negro. And I agree fully with Mr. Blaine that his practical use of the ballot was an important part of that education. I am willing to accept the present condition of the South as the result of that practical education. Will he ? I say that the negro has been using this defense for ten years, that in this time hundreds of thousands of negroes, born free, have grown to manhood under the experience of a political life as open to them as to the old, white governing race ; and Mr. Blaine himself asserts that education has been more generally diffused among the youth of the colored race

than among the poorer classes of the whites—whether truly or erroneously we will not here discuss—and the result is, that throughout the South the races vote together ; that they have learned where their mutual interest lies ; and that, whom God has joined, all the politicians have failed to keep asunder.

I have his essay before me. He denies that this is a legitimate result. He insists that the facts prove that the negro vote has been cheated by fraud or defeated by force, and that the present condition of Southern politics is an unnatural result. I am willing to meet this issue on his own principles. I will indulge in neither invective nor denunciation. I will simply take the late government of South Carolina or of Louisiana, or of other States under similar rule, and describe it in language that Mr. Blaine may himself select. When he has told its history I will ask him whether he would willingly, as a patriotic American, desire to see his own State, or any other of the free States, reduced to such a level ? I am not afraid of his answer, or that of any man who has been bred under the traditions of a virtuous civilization.

Then I will say to him : This, it is true, is a painful result ; but, when you put the ballot in the hands of an ignorant negro majority as a means of education and progress, you must be patient while they learn their lesson. We of the South have borne all this, because we knew that the reaction must come. It has come. The results which you see to be so bad the negro has seen also. He has come back to us with the same blind impulse with which a few years ago he fled from us. He may be as ignorant a Democrat as he was an ignorant Republican, but years must yet pass before the ballot will have educated him fully into self-reliant, temperate citizenship ; and what we of the South have borne, our friends of the North must bear with us, until the negro has become what we both want to make him. This is part of his education. By a system, not one whit less a system of force or of fraud than that alleged to exist now, he was taken away from his natural leaders at the South, and held to a compact Republican vote. Granting—which I do not grant—that the present methods are as bad as those then applied, the fault lies in the character of the vote. It is not educated to free action, and we must educate it to what it ought to be. Take the history of the race, as stated by Mr. Blaine himself, and is there not progress, astonishing progress, when the material with which we are dealing is considered ? Force and fraud have been freely charged. Suppose it granted. Could any one expect, did any one expect, that

such a tremendous political and social change—the sudden clothing of four million slaves with suffrage and with overruling political power—could be made without violent disturbance and disorder? Had any such change ever been made in any free State without convulsion? Was it to be expected that, when the capital and character of a State were placed at the mercy of a numerical majority of ignorant and poverty-stricken voters, it would present a model of peace and order?

But all this while the ballot has been educating the negro. He has learned that he was a power between Republican and Democrat. He is now learning rapidly that at the South he is a power between Democrat and Democrat, and in the late election he made that power felt in the result. I would have preferred a much less costly tuition; but, such as it is, it has been paid for, and, if Mr. Blaine will patiently trust his own theory, he will find the ballot in the hands of the negro the best defense and the best educator. But, as the South has been patient, so must he be patient. As the South has chafed ineffectually when that vote was all against her white people, so will he chafe ineffectually when it is now largely for them.

In his perplexity over the sudden change in the vote of the negro, Mr. Blaine has forgotten that, at this stage of its progress, the negro vote can not intelligently direct itself. It must and will follow some leader. Now, up to 1876 the Republican party, armed with all the authority of the Federal Government, supplied those leaders. They were strangers in the States they governed. The moment that the compact vote upon which their power rested was divided, they abandoned their places, and in almost every case left the State in which they had ruled. The great mass of colored voters was left without guides. In many of the largest counties, where their majority was absolute, they were not only not organized, but there was not interest enough to print a Republican ticket. The weapon of defense which had been given to the negro was thrown away by his leaders in their flight, and Mr. Blaine can scarcely complain if it was picked up by the Democrats. In saying this I do not wish to provoke or renew useless and irritating controversies; but Mr. Blaine's position is, that not only the negro ought not to be disfranchised, but that such a question could never have suggested itself but for an illegal control of the negro vote by Southern Democrats. My view is that, while the enfranchisement of the negro was a political necessity, it could not be effected without subjecting the

country to such dangerous political aberrations as we have experienced ; that a wise man would have foreseen them ; and that, in fact, they have been less than could reasonably have been anticipated ; that the ballot in the hands of the negro has been a protection and an educator ; that with it he has been stronger and safer in all his rights than the Chinese have been in California without it ; and that the problems it raised are steadily and without danger solving themselves through the process of local self-government.

When Mr. Blaine admits that disfranchisement is impossible and that the ballot has been, in spite of all drawbacks, a benefit to the negro, he really proves that there is no organic question affecting great national interests, but simply the subordinate question, How rapidly is the ballot fitting the negro for the full enjoyment of his citizenship, and what influence does his vote exercise upon the supremacy of one party or the other in national politics ? This latter may be an interesting question, but not one which should disturb either a sound national sentiment or great national interests. I do not propose to discuss it. I am of opinion that to make the negro a free citizen it was necessary first to take him from his master. Then it became necessary to take him from the party which claimed his vote as absolutely as his master had claimed his labor. The next step will be to take him as a class from either party and allow him to differ and divide just as white men do. The difficulty so far has been that the Republican party desires to retain the negro not as a voter, but as a Republican voter. Party politics have been directed to keep him at the South in antagonism to the white race, with whom all his material interests are identified. Whenever—and the time is not distant—whenever political issues arise which divide the white men of the South, the negro will divide too. The time will then have come when he can not act against the white race as a body or with the white race as a body. He will have to choose for himself ; and the white race, divided politically, will want him to divide. The use of his vote will then be the exercise of his individual intelligence, and he will find friends on all sides willing and anxious to enlighten and influence him, and to sustain him in his decisions.

The whole country has passed through a very painful experience in the solution of this question, and no one can adequately describe the bitterness of the trial of the South ; but she has borne it, and it seems to me that a statesman who loves this great country of which we are all citizens should feel that the time has come when

a kindly judgment of each other's difficulties would bring us nearer to that unanimity of action which can alone aid the solution of a grave social and political problem. I was born and bred a slaveholder, born and bred among slaveholders ; I have known slavery in its kindest and most beneficent aspect. My associations with the past of men and things are full of love and reverence. In all history never has a heavy duty been discharged more faithfully, more conscientiously, more successfully, than by the slaveholders of the South. But, if I know myself and those whom I represent, we have accepted the change in the same spirit. No citizen of this republic more than the Southerner can or does desire to see the negro improved, elevated, civilized, made a useful and worthy element in our political life. None more than they deplore and condemn all violence or other means tending to hinder the enjoyment of his elective franchise. The South took him, as he was sent to her, a wild and godless barbarian, and made him such that the North has been able to give him citizenship without the destruction of our institutions. The progress which he made with us as a slave will not be arrested now that he is a freeman—unless party passion and personal ambition insist upon using him as an instrument for selfish ends. And I have joined in this discussion because I regard it an honest effort to remove this question from the heated atmosphere of political debate, and to ask the conscientious attention of thinking men to a problem the wise and peaceful solution of which will be one of the noblest achievements of democratic civilization.

Mr. Blaine assumes that the Southern States as a whole—differing in degree but the same in effect—have through force and fraud so suppressed the negro vote as to make negro suffrage as far as possible of none effect. The statistics of election will show that the negro vote throughout the South has not been suppressed. That there have been instances of fraud and force I admit and deplore, but they have been exceptional. Take them all in the recent election and average them among a population of twelve millions of people, and to what do they amount? The President, in reviewing the whole subject after these elections, did allege, and could only allege, that in all these States but seven Congressional districts exhibited results which were altered by either fraud or force. When we consider the fact that since the formation of the Government there have been but few Congresses, if any, in which there have not been elections from all parts of the Union contested on these very grounds, and then bear in mind that at no time in our history,

and in no other part of our country, has there ever been so keen and searching a scrutiny into the facts of election as that to which the South has been subjected, these exaggerated statements of force and fraud must be reduced to their real proportions.

But suppose the allegation which Mr. Blaine puts as the argument of those who advocate disfranchisement be true, viz., that the present political condition of the South is practically the rule, not of a numerical majority of the whole people black and white, but of the whites as one unanimous class; and let it be conceded fully that such a political condition, if it actually exists, is an evil, what is the precise nature and extent of that evil? In the first place, it is not pretended that any of these civil rights of person and property that negro suffrage was intended to protect have been invaded or endangered. Indeed, this seems to be impliedly admitted, though not explicitly stated in Mr. Blaine's article. The object of the Fifteenth Amendment is fully disclosed by contemporaneous debates. It was to protect and establish free labor in the South, in all its new relations of rights and interests, by giving to the emancipated laborer the political means of maintaining those rights and interests. Now, will any one deny that this purpose has not achieved its fullest consummation under existing conditions? Is free labor anywhere on earth more firmly established, more fully developed, or more absolute in its demands (even for exaggerated remuneration), and more secure and unrestricted in the enjoyment of its gains, than in the South? In all respects, negro freedom and negro equality before the law, security of person and property, are ample and complete. To protect these, should they be invaded, he has the franchise with which a freeman can maintain his rights. He may no longer allow it to be used as a tool for the rapacity of political adventurers; but he is perfectly conscious of the fact which Mr. Blaine states, that his right to vote is to himself and his race a shield and sword of defense.

The question, then, recurs—conceding, for the sake of argument, that in the South political rule represents not the will of mere numbers, but the intellectual culture, the moral strength, the material interests, the skilled labor, the useful capital of that entire section, as well as its political experience—is not this result exactly what the intelligence, character, and property of the country are striving to effect in every Congressional district in the Union, and is it not a perfectly legitimate result of placing the ballot in the hands of a population unfamiliar with its use, and who are pecu-

liarily susceptible to the influences which property and brains have always exerted in popular government?

I anticipate the answer ; it is, that the property and intelligence of the other sections seek to control the votes of the masses by methods that are legitimate and peaceful, while the Southern whites have achieved their power by means which are unlawful and unjust. So far I have to some extent, for the sake of argument, conceded the assumption that the negro vote has been subjected to the forcible control of the white race, but that I deny. Reference has been made to the great change which the election returns show in the negro vote throughout the South. The phenomenon is easily explained. Let any intelligent Northern man review the history of the State governments of the South for the last ten years under Republican rule—their gross and shameless dishonesty, their exorbitant taxation, their reckless expenditure, their oppression of all native interests, the social agonies through which they have forced all that was good and pure to pass as through a fiery furnace ; the character of the men—many of them—they have placed in power ; and then say if such a state of things in a Northern or Western State would not have been a sure and natural precursor of a Republican defeat, so absolute and complete that the very name of the party would have become in that State a name of scorn and reproach. Then why should not that result have occurred in the South ? Are we to assume that the black race have neither instinct nor reason—have no sense, no intelligence, no conscience, no independence ; that in every Southern State the thralldom of the negro vote to party leaders, even when abandoned by them, is so unquestioning and abject that no amount of misrule can cut him loose from them or teach him the advantage of a more natural and wholesome political alliance ? To reason thus is simply to say that the negro is unfit for suffrage, and to surrender the argument to those who hold that he ought to be disfranchised.

But this is not true. There are many honest, intelligent, and independent men among the negroes in every Southern State. There are thousands of them who own property, who cultivate their own lands, who have taxes to pay, and who appreciate their vital interests in good government. This change in his political relations which has been the subject of so much incredulous comment is the legitimate result of the experience through which he has gone.

So far from proving his weak subordination to a hostile influence,

it demonstrates what Mr. Blaine says, that the ballot-box indeed educated him to understand his own interest, and that he has learned to use it as an instrument to protect his own rights. To interfere with such a result because it does not square with the necessities or the ambitions of this or that party, seems to me to be in direct contradiction to what has been suggested by Mr. Blaine himself. He says, "The one sure mode to remand the States that rebelled against the Union to their autonomy was to give suffrage to the negro," leaving (I venture to add) to self-government the evolution of the proper remedies for whatever of evil or error may attend the working out of this grave and critical experiment.

L. Q. C. LAMAR.

MR. HAMPTON.

IN discussing the questions upon which my views are asked, the limits prescribed me in the invitation prevent anything more than a mere statement of opinion. Even were this otherwise, my present condition forbids me to enter into any extended or elaborate argument. Mine must be, therefore, simply a presentation in crude form of the views I entertain, and have entertained for some years, upon the grave questions submitted for consideration. I shall endeavor to write in a spirit free from all partisanship or sectionalism, with the sole purpose of promoting the cause of truth and the welfare of the whole country.

The first question is, "Should the negro be disfranchised?" There has been much agitation of this subject recently—chiefly at the North—and many who have hitherto been the most earnest advocates of negro suffrage begin to think that the bestowal of this privilege upon him has resulted in failure. Those who thus think suppose that the withdrawal of the right of suffrage would at once restore the ancient and normal condition of things in the country; would reëstablish friendly relations between the races of the South; and in so far as it would diminish representation would lessen the influence of that section in national affairs. This latter argument, I regret to see, has had most weight with a large class, though it is inconsistent with a true and catholic patriotism—a patriotism which looks to the good of the whole republic, and not to that of a limited section.

But, whatever may be the motives of those who desire the disfranchisement of the negro, the accomplishment of such a result has been rendered impossible by the action of the national and State governments. Great and startling as have been the political mutations of the last few years, the disfranchisement of the negro at this or any subsequent period would be more surprising than any political event in our past history. The question, therefore, does not belong to practical politics, and is a mere speculative one. Considering it in the latter aspect, I do not hesitate to answer in the negative. Whatever may have been the policy of conferring the right of voting upon the negro, ignorant and incompetent as he was to comprehend the high responsibility thrust upon him, and whatever may have been the reasons which dictated this dangerous experiment, the deed has been done and it is irrevocable. It is now the part of true statesmanship to give it as far as possible that direction which will be most beneficial or least hurtful to the body politic.

How is this to be accomplished ?

My answer would be, by educating the negro until he comprehends the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. By "education" I do not mean the mere acquisition of learning, but I apply the term in its broadest sense. The possession of the rudiments of education—the mere mental training that this implies—so far from being always beneficial to its possessor, is often harmful. Many of our lately enfranchised citizens make the first use of their newly acquired ability to read and write by committing forgery, and here, at least, they have manifested a wonderful aptitude. By educating them I mean that their moral nature should be cultivated, *pari passu*, with their intellect. This moral education is of far greater importance than an intellectual one. A man is not necessarily a better citizen because he can read and write, nor does the possession of these acquirements make him, as a matter of course, more competent to understand and discharge the duties of citizenship. I doubt whether the citizens of that State which makes its boast that more of its people can read and write than in any other government are equal in art, in culture, and in statesmanship, to the Athenians in their palmyest days, who were without these accomplishments the most intelligent and critical of political constituencies.

As the stability of our institutions depends on the intelligence and virtue of our citizens, it is the duty of every patriot to pro-

mote the cause of true education. Especially is this the case with regard to that unfortunate people who, after centuries of servitude, were suddenly called to exercise the highest duties of freemen. They came to the discharge of these duties utterly ignorant, with the prejudices, the habits, and the evils inculcated by a life of slavery—merely children of a larger growth, and, like all children, full of credulity. It is not to be wondered at, then, that they were easily misled by the wicked and designing men who flocked to the South when she was prostrate. But, in spite of the evil advice they have so constantly received, they have on the whole behaved better than any other people similarly situated would have done, and the whites of the South have no reason to cherish any ill will toward the blacks. Nor do they; and the time is rapidly approaching when the colored people will find their best friends among the thoughtful and considerate whites of the South—a class by no means small at present, and which is growing larger and stronger every hour. But this digression leads me from the discussion of the question under consideration; and my purpose, as declared at the outset, was only to state my opinions, not to enter into argument to establish them.

From the remarks already made, my answer to the first question submitted is easily anticipated: it would be almost impossible to disfranchise the negro, and, if possible, it would not be carried into effect. The South does not desire to see this done, and without her aid it can never be accomplished. The negro contributes not only to the wealth of the South, but to her political power, and she is indisposed to deprive herself of any of her advantages.

As the negro becomes more intelligent, he naturally allies himself with the more conservative of the whites, for his observation and experience both show him that his interests are identified with those of the white race here.

This is the inevitable tendency of things as they now stand at the South, and no extraneous pressure can change a result which is as sure and fixed as any other natural law.

The opinions which are announced above have not been hastily formed or only recently entertained. They are the result of very earnest and long reflection, and as an evidence of this it may not be improper, even at the risk of appearing to touch too closely on personal matters, to state the position that I have occupied in regard to these questions since the close of the war. In 1865, even before I had received my parole, I spoke, and was the first man at the

South who did so, to a large audience of negroes upon the changed relations between the two races, and I gave to them the same advice that I have given from that day to this. In 1867, in the city of Columbia, at the earnest invitation of the colored people themselves, I spoke to them again, and upon that occasion advocated qualified suffrage. It must be borne in mind that at the time this was done some of the most prominent leaders of the Republican party had taken decided ground against giving the right of suffrage to the negro. It is unnecessary to give all the reasons that induced me to take this course: it is sufficient to say that I fully realized that when a man had been made a citizen of the United States he could not be debarred the right of voting on account of his color. Such exclusion would be opposed to the entire theory of republican institutions, and I foresaw that, unless the States, while they had the right of regulating the elective franchise, prescribed the qualifications of their voters, the national Government would intervene, and we should have universal suffrage forced upon us. My object, then, was, by fixing an educational qualification as a prerequisite for voting, to allow the most intelligent of the colored people to vote at once, and this would have been an inducement to the rest of the race to endeavor to qualify themselves for the attainment and exercise of this privilege by securing the necessary education. The admission of the limited number who would thus have been allowed to vote at first would have produced no confusion in the machinery of the State governments, and the relations between the two races would have been friendly and harmonious; but the course that I recommended was not adopted, and we of the South have been subjected to all the humiliation and crime brought about by reconstruction. As the negro is now acquiring education and property, he is becoming more conservative, and naturally desires to assist in the establishment and maintenance of good government and home rule. I have endeavored—and I think not without success—to teach him here how to use the vote for his own good, and the benefit of the political society in which he lives and with which his future prosperity is identified. The result has been shown in the last two general elections in this State, where thousands of negroes voted with their white friends; and if any doubt is entertained of the sincerity of these voters, and any impartial visitor from the North will take the pains to inquire throughout the State, I will venture the assertion that in every locality he will find as earnest, as active, and as consistent Democrats among the colored

people as among the whites, and these colored Democrats are generally among the more intelligent of their race.

Under these circumstances, as the negro is endeavoring very generally to qualify himself for the duties of citizenship, the wrong of disfranchising him would be as great as that inflicted upon us in the first instance, when universal suffrage was given to him while he was yet utterly unprepared to exercise it.

The second question to which my attention has been invited is, "Ought the negro to have been enfranchised?" It may seem inconsistent with the views I have expressed in the first part of this article to say that I do not think he should have been enfranchised at the time and in the manner in which it was done. My first objection is, that the mode that was pursued, if not directly unconstitutional, was certainly extra-constitutional, and I am utterly opposed to any violation, direct or indirect, of that instrument. Whenever a political party thinks it is necessary, in order to secure its supremacy, to act outside of the Constitution, and this is permitted by the people without rebuke, we may be sure that we have entered upon that downward plane which every previous republic has traveled to destruction. The only hope of maintaining our institutions in their integrity is by a strict observance of the Constitution, and no party should be allowed to remain a moment in power which countenances in any manner any violation of its sacred provisions.

My next objection to conferring suffrage on the negro, immediately upon his emancipation, was that he was totally incompetent to exercise or even to understand the rights conferred upon him. The injection of such a mass of ignorant and untrained voters into the body politic was the most perilous strain to which our institutions have ever been subjected, and the danger arising from this experiment has not yet passed. It was a crime against the whites of the South to disfranchise them in large part while enfranchising the negro, and thus practically placing all the rights of the former at the mercy of newly emancipated slaves. All these difficulties might have been avoided had partial suffrage been adopted in the first instance, and the relations between the two races been allowed to adjust themselves by the unimpeded action of natural laws. This course would have been infinitely better for the negro himself, as it would gradually have trained him in the exercise of the rights of freemen, and would have prevented that antagonism between the

two races which has resulted, in so many instances, to the injury of the negro.

Those who assert that the negro should have been enfranchised have not hesitated to declare that the Indian, the native freeman of America, and the Chinese, who have sought our shores in such numbers, should be debarred that right. There seems to be some inconsistency in these views, and the advocates of negro enfranchisement should be called on to show why the privilege should be granted to him, the newly emancipated slave, and yet denied to men who have always been free and who possess more intelligence.

When the negro was made a citizen, it followed as a logical consequence, under the theory of our institutions, that he must become a voter. My objection to his enfranchisement, therefore, is confined to the time when and the mode in which this privilege was conferred upon him.

I have answered these questions with entire frankness, in the hope that such a discussion, free from political acrimony and partisan misconceptions, would encourage the calm and conscientious consideration of the whole subject.

WADE HAMPTON.

MR. GARFIELD.

THE editor of "The Review" has asked my opinion on the two questions discussed by Mr. Blaine. Were these questions proposed to the two Houses of Congress, I have no doubt that it would be declared, with hardly a dissenting vote, that the negro ought not to be disfranchised. On the second question, the formal vote might not be unanimous ; but I have no doubt that a large majority would declare that the negro ought to have been enfranchised.

If it shall appear on a new roll-call in 1879 that none are in favor of disfranchising the negro, and few are ready to declare that he ought not to have been enfranchised, we may reasonably conclude that these measures are gaining strength, and that their wisdom will finally be fully vindicated by the popular judgment.

But a vote on these questions at this time, by "ayes and noes," is misleading, for it does not disclose the real differences of opinion which prevail among the people ; nor does it reach the marrow of the controversy out of which the questions themselves arise. In fact, both of the great parties are influenced by the strongest political motives to maintain at least a profession of friendship for the

negro. Political interest will therefore prevent a direct assault upon the constitutional amendments. It is practically impossible to rescind them ; and I believe it is an historical fact that no government, based on the national will, has ever withdrawn the right of suffrage when once granted.

But below the formal questions which head this article, lies this deeper one : Will enfranchisement finally prove a blessing or a curse to the negro, and an element of weakness or of strength to our institutions ?

Not long since a citizen of great ability and national prominence said to me : "Your party has ruined the Government of our fathers. In carrying up the walls of our national temple you have used untempered mortar ; and your work will crumble and fall, involving in ruin the whole structure. The negro belongs to an inferior race ; is without intellectual stamina and without any strong, enduring qualities of mind. Though he has been on our continent but a few generations, he has wholly forgotten the religion, the language, and even the traditions of his native country. He has no permanent individuality of character. Like the chameleon, he takes the color of his surroundings ; and as a voter he will for ever be a source of weakness and danger to our institutions."

This is perhaps the most powerful arraignment of the policy of enfranchisement which has been made. In reply it should be said, in the outset, that those who denounce the enfranchisement of the negro as unwise and dangerous are bound to show a better adjustment of his status. Even the defenders of the old system will hardly deny that the continued existence of chattel slavery was impossible. It was the sum of all injustice to the negro himself and a standing declaration of war against the public peace. Its destruction did not arise from mere meddlesomeness on the part of the North ; the feeling against slavery was world-wide, and we were among the last of modern nations to realize its infamy and remove it from our system.

Between slavery and full citizenship, there was no safe middle ground. To strike the shackles from the negro's limbs, to declare by law that he should not be bought or sold, scourged or branded at the will of his master, and then to leave him with no means of defending his rights before the courts and juries of the country—to arm him with no legal or political weapons of defense—would have been an injustice hardly less cruel to him, and a policy even more dangerous to the public peace, than slavery itself. To leave

the defense of all the rights of person and property of the manumitted slave to those who had just voted unanimously against his freedom, would have been alike dishonorable and cruel. Indeed, this experiment was attempted soon after the close of the war. While the seceding States were under military control, the white people of the South were invited to aid in solving the difficulties of the negro problem by electing their own Legislatures and establishing provisional governments. The result was that in 1865, 1866, and a portion of 1867, their Legislatures, notably those of Mississippi and Louisiana, restricted the personal liberty of the negro, prohibited him from owning real estate, and enacted vagrant and peonage laws, whereby negroes were sold at auction for the payment of taxes or fines, and were virtually reduced to a slavery as real as that which existed before the war.

Congress was, therefore, compelled to choose between a policy which would have made the negro the permanent ward of the nation, and by constant interference with the local laws of the States would protect his personal and property rights, or to place in his own hands the legal and political means of self-defense. It was a choice between perpetual interference with the autonomy of the States—a policy at war with the fundamental principles of our Government, and intolerable to the white population of the South—and the risk of admitting to the suffrage four millions of people who were, as yet, in a large measure unfitted for its wise and intelligent exercise. In reviewing the situation as it existed from 1867 to 1869, I can not conceive on what grounds the wisdom of the choice then made can be denied. Possibly a plan of granting suffrage gradually as the negro became more intelligent would have been wiser; but the practical difficulties of such a plan would have been very great, and its discussion at this time can have no practical value.

The ballot was given to the negro not so much to enable him to govern others as to prevent others from misgoverning him. Suffrage is the sword and shield of our law, the best armament that liberty offers to the citizen.

It would be strange indeed if the negro should always use this weapon with wisdom and honesty. That he would sometimes be influenced by corrupt leaders was inevitable; but that, in spite of all drawbacks, the suffrage has done and is doing much for his protection and elevation, is evident from the anxiety shown by all political parties to prove themselves his friend.

His progress under liberty may have disappointed some of his

over-sanguine friends ; but, in a still more marked way, it has disappointed the expectations of those who opposed his freedom. Dullness of intellect, a low state of morals, a want of thrift and foresight—all these were the inevitable results of generations of slavery, which afforded no incentive to the development of those qualities that make citizens independent, intelligent, and self-reliant. If the negroes had lost the passion for acquiring property, if they had shown themselves unwilling to work, neither liberty nor suffrage could have saved them. They would finally disappear, as the Indians are disappearing, and for the same reasons. But the evidences are increasing on every hand that they are successfully solving the problem of their own future, by a commendable degree of industry, and by very earnest efforts to educate their children. In these efforts they are outstripping the class known in the days of slavery as “the poor whites.” While they and their political friends had the control of legislation in the Southern States, vigorous measures were adopted to establish and maintain public schools ; and, though these efforts have been greatly discouraged by recent State legislation, their thirst for knowledge has not been quenched. There is every indication that in the next generation they will show a marked advance in intelligence.

They are acquiring property far more rapidly than their white neighbors expected. In the Freedman’s Saving Bank alone, the failure of which was so calamitous, they had deposited surplus earnings to the amount of three millions of dollars. They are gradually becoming owners of real estate and of comfortable homes. In one county of South Carolina they are now paying \$300,000 of taxes per annum ; and this is neither an isolated nor an exaggerated example. In short, they are gradually gaining those two elements of power, “intelligence and wealth,” which Senator Thurman says will in the long run control the politics of a community.

As an example of what the negro can do under more favorable circumstances than those which have existed in the South, I refer to the settlement of the Virginia Military Reserve in Ohio, between the Scioto and Miami Rivers. Late in the last and early in the present century, many Virginia soldiers of the War of Independence removed to their lands in Ohio. Most of them were antislavery men by conviction, and brought their slaves with them for the purpose of manumission. These negroes settled near their late masters, enjoyed their friendship and counsel, and did not encounter the prejudices of race and color which they might have met among men of

Northern birth. Under such conditions they have lived for two or three generations. There has been scarcely any admixture of blood and no serious collision of interests ; and to-day, in central and southern Ohio, their descendants, to the number of several thousand families, rank fairly with other intelligent, respectable, and well-to-do citizens of the State ; and are, in all respects, greatly superior to their Virginia ancestors.

Much as the negroes of the South have accomplished since emancipation, their most unfriendly critics will hardly venture to assert that they have had a fair chance to test the influences of freedom and citizenship. Our theory of government is based upon the belief that the suffrage carries with it individual responsibility, stimulates the activity and promotes the intelligence and self-respect of the voter. To accomplish these results the voter must be allowed to exercise his rights freely and without restraint.

Doubtless the mere property rights of the Southern negroes are every year being more and more fully recognized by their white neighbors ; but in many parts of the South, it is the merest mockery to pretend that the suffrage has been free. The spirit of domination which slavery engendered has led a large portion of the white population to consider the effort of the negro to cast his ballot in his own way as an act of intolerable impertinence. Open violence, concealed fraud, and threatened loss of employment, in many parts of the South, have virtually destroyed the suffrage and deprived the negro of all the benefits which it was intended to confer.

Hitherto, these outrages have been justified or excused on the ground that they were provoked by the interference of the national authorities with local self-government in the South. But during the past two years, there has been no ground even for this poor excuse. And now we have a new ground of justification. A leading politician of Louisiana, testifying before the Teller Committee a few days ago, declared that the murders and other acts of violence which attended the late election in that State were provoked by "incendiary speeches" of Republican leaders. In his cross-examination, this witness favored us with his definition of political incendiarism. When asked to give examples, he cited the fact that a certain campaign orator "had referred to the old days of slavery, saying that old men who had been slaveholders, and whose ideas were fixed in the past, would not be as likely to respect the rights and advance the interests of the blacks as younger men who had grown up under the new condition of affairs." Also, in discussing

the industrial relation of the negroes to their employers, the incendiary orator told the negroes that "they were paying too high rent for land, often as much each year as the land would sell for." Such discussion the witness considered so dangerous as to justify the wrath and violence of the white population against the Republican party.

Until there is one acknowledged law of liberty for white and black men alike, it is idle to claim that the amendments of the Constitution are obeyed either in spirit or letter, or that enfranchisement has had a fair trial.

The plea of "incendiary speeches" will not be accepted by a liberty-loving nation as a justification of murder, violence, or any invasion of the rights of citizens, however humble, however black. The wisdom of enfranchisement cannot be impeached by prophesying in advance that it will prove a disastrous failure, and then endeavoring *per fas aut nefas* to make it a failure.

If the Democratic party does not disclaim and effectively resist such outrages and invasions of constitutional rights, we shall again witness the deplorable spectacle of parties—divided by geographical lines, a solid South and a united North—arrayed in political opposition.

Such a conflict will not only retard the advancement of the negro and delay the restoration of national harmony, but it will inflict immeasurable injury upon the social and business prosperity of the South itself. Emigration follows the path of liberty. Free and independent Americans will not voluntarily become citizens of a State in which full liberty of debate and of the ballot is not assured.

Since the war, it is probable that more emigrants from the North and from Europe have settled in Texas than in all the other Gulf States combined. And this is because the traditions and sentiments of the Texan people have been regarded as more favorable to freedom of personal opinion and political action than those of the people of neighboring Southern States.

If the policy of repression and exclusion, which unhappily prevails in most of the late slaveholding States, shall be maintained, each new census will disclose such a relative loss of population and wealth as will prove every way disastrous to their political influence and commercial prosperity. But parties will not always divide on the color line. I have no doubt that enlightened self-interest will ere long lead the people of the South to seek prosperity by making

the suffrage in fact, as it already is in law, free and safe to all on whom the Constitution has conferred it. When that day comes, we shall enjoy a national unity which slavery would have made for ever impossible ; and the wisdom of enfranchisement will be fully vindicated. Beneficent as its results have already been, they are destined to be still more fruitful of good in the future.

In conclusion, I answer these questions by saying that on every ground of private right, of public justice, and national safety, the negro ought to have been enfranchised. For the same reasons, strengthened and confirmed by our experience, he ought not to be disfranchised. Reviewing the elements of the larger problem, I do not doubt that enfranchisement will, in the long run, greatly promote the intellectual, moral, and industrial welfare of the negro race in America ; and, instead of imperiling the safety of our institutions, will remove from them the greatest danger which has ever threatened them.

JAMES A. GARFIELD.

MR. STEPHENS.

THE questions submitted for inquiry and consideration in the paper now presented involve problems of the gravest and most interesting character that ever engaged the attention of philanthropists or statesmen.

It is not the purpose of the undersigned, in taking part in the discussion or in connecting himself with it, to enter at this time into a consideration of the merits in the abstract of either of these questions.

The great problem involved in the first is now in a state of solution, and it does not seem to be at all practicable or advisable, in the midst of this process, to be mooted or answering the reasons which led originally to the policy on which it was founded, or the propriety of its adoption.

The matter, according to Mr. Blaine's own assumption, has been settled beyond the power of even constitutional remedy. No arguments drawn *ab inconvenienti* are allowable ; they are precluded by conclusions drawn *ab impossibili*. This is the announcement. Then why agitate or disturb it ? Should it not, rather, be the object of all good citizens, of all parties, and all friends of humanity, whether originally favoring that policy or not, to give it a fair

trial, with an earnest and hopeful effort for its success, leaving the future in this matter, as in other like problems, to take care of itself?

The discussion of these questions now, therefore, seems to be quite as irrelevant as impracticable. The undersigned, however, will avail himself of the occasion thus presented to make a few general observations upon the paper submitted :

1. Mr. Blaine, after thus setting forth the perfect inviolability of the right of suffrage, constitutionally secured to the colored man, uses these very notable words :

In the mean while, seeing no mode of legally or equitably depriving the negro of his suffrage, except with unwelcome penalties to themselves, the Southern States as a whole—differing in degree, but the same in effect—have striven to achieve, by indirect and unlawful means, what they can not achieve directly and lawfully. They have, so far as possible, made negro suffrage of none effect. They have done this against law and against justice.

These are grave assertions. Where is the evidence to support them? On them issue is directly joined.

The charge in substance is, that the Southern States as a whole, with common design, have striven to deprive the colored man of his right to vote by indirect and unlawful means. Wherein have "the Southern States as a whole," or a single one of them, done, or attempted to do, any such thing? States act by their Legislatures, courts, and executives. Has it been by legislative acts, or executive acts, or judicial decisions? If so, the production of these high-handed usurpations is invoked.

The undersigned speaks mainly of his own State, Georgia. That wrongs, and great wrongs, have been committed by individuals at the polls in that State and in many of the Southern States, or perhaps all of them, he does not question—wrongs to whites as well as blacks ; but he does question if greater wrongs have been perpetrated in the Southern States, in this respect, than in the Northern States. "The world is a school of wrong," and skilled proficients "swarm about" everywhere. But, that the Southern States, in whole or in part, in any way in which States can act, have ever arrayed themselves against their own constitutions and laws, to say nothing of Federal obligations, in an effort to deprive the colored man of the right to vote, is utterly denied. It is true, in Georgia, and perhaps in other States, the constitutional requirement of a poll-tax of a dollar for school purposes does practically keep several thousand colored voters from the polls ; but it is

a provision wise and just in its objects, and applies equally to white and black. The constitutional provision, also, making conviction of felony a forfeiture of the franchise, is likely in its workings to exclude a much larger number of colored voters from the polls than whites ; but no one questions the justice of such exclusion either of whites or blacks.

The Constitution of Georgia, before the Fifteenth Amendment was even proposed, secured the right of suffrage to colored and white alike ; and it has been the object of the State government in all its branches to maintain this franchise, in its purity and integrity, from that day to this. It was but yesterday the undersigned saw in the Augusta "Evening News" the charge of Judge Snead, of that judicial circuit, upon this very subject, an extract from which may not be deemed impertinent or irrelevant in this connection. It shows to what full, free, and even abusive extent the right of suffrage is carried in that State by the colored people. Here is the extract :

After treating of general subjects prescribed by law, the Judge gave the following strong points in reference to the freedom of the ballot at the recent elections. He said : Outside of all these, I desire to direct your attention to one section of the penal code, which was intended to guard the freedom of the elective franchise and the purity of the ballot-box. It is section 4,569, and is in these words : "If any person shall hereafter buy or sell, or offer to buy or sell, or be concerned in buying or selling a vote, or shall unlawfully vote at any election which may be held in any county of this State, such person shall be indicted for misdemeanor, and, on conviction, shall be punished by imprisonment and labor in the penitentiary for a term of not less than one nor more than four years."

In this connection I read for your consideration extracts from our city papers, which profess to portray certain scenes at the last municipal election in Augusta :

"Money was freely exhibited and offered for votes, and as freely and as openly taken. The price of a vote ranged from ten cents to five dollars, according to the desire of the purchaser to obtain the vote and the estimate put by the seller upon the value of the franchise. Hundreds of votes were thus openly disposed of in plain view of everybody. In some instances the voter held the ballot at arm's-length with one hand and held out the other for the money which was to pay for his vote."—"Chronicle and Constitutionalist."

"The election-day has passed, and with it a day has gone to record that will stand as a foul stain upon the fair name and reputation of a city grown old in honor, and up to yesterday unsullied by the bold hand of bare-faced bribery and open corruption. Votes were openly bought and sold with

money and whisky as a price—one hand holding the vote and the other stretched out for the reward.”—“Evening News.”

I know not whether this is true, but it has been published as a part of the history of this our day and generation. It could not have escaped the observation, and must have excited the solicitude, of many good citizens. If true, it is a sad commentary upon the corruption of the times, when the purity of the ballot-box is thus violated in the broad light of day; when the elective franchise is made a purchasable commodity, and voters are bought and sold as so many herds of cattle. The whole theory of our Government is in the opposite direction. It rests upon the free consent of the governed. This, at least, should be the practice in every department, from the Federal head at Washington, through the various ramifications in the States, down to the humblest municipality. The liberty of the citizen, the security of property—ay, the whole fabric of society rests for its base upon the free, unbought suffrages of the people. . . . Present all parties implicated, whether high or low. . . . Let your investigation be strictly impartial—not confined to one, but extend to all sides—and if your sword, like that which flamed at Eden's gate, turns a double edge, let the great blow fall.

This record of one of our judges truly exhibits the tone of the judiciary throughout the State of Georgia. It is needless to add, perhaps, that the votes which were so openly sold in the market were chiefly, if not entirely, those of the lowest class of the colored race. The same is true of the elections held near the same time in Atlanta, Macon, and other parts of the State, according to newspaper accounts.

2. Mr. Blaine clearly intimates his own belief, as well as that of other original advocates of the enfranchisement of the colored race, that “negro suffrage has failed to attain the ends hoped for when the franchise was conferred . . . failed to achieve anything except to increase the political weight and influence of those against whom, and in spite of whom, his enfranchisement was secured.”

Pray, what were the ends thus hoped for? Without extended comment on these sentences, as to the character of the motives actuating some, at least, of the original advocates of “negro suffrage,” which are very apparent from the entire passage, it may be pardonable to say that perhaps the present *gravamen* with them is that the colored man does not vote as they expected him to vote; perhaps they may also see from the exhibitions referred to in Augusta, Atlanta, Macon, and in other places, that their votes are much more easily controlled by money than they supposed they would be. If this be *intimidation*, and depriving the colored people of the inestimable right of voting, then it must be admitted that it is carried

to a lamentable extent in Georgia, if not in other States, and can only be prevented by such enforcement of our State laws as Judge Snead invokes. It cannot be remedied, as far as the undersigned sees, by any proper action of Congress.

3. Mr. Blaine says :

The Fourteenth Amendment was designed to prevent this [that is, the increased representation of the Southern States in Congress, on the emancipation of those at the South who previously owed service for life], and, if it does not succeed in preventing it, it is because of evasion and violation of its clear provisions and of its plain intent. Those who erected the Confederate Government may be in exclusive possession of power throughout the South ; but they are not so fairly and legally ; and they will not be permitted to continue in the enjoyment of political power unjustly seized—and seized in derogation and in defiance of the rights not merely of the negro, but of the whites in all other sections of the country.

What is really meant here by the reference to the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment, and the enjoyment of “political power unjustly seized—seized in derogation and defiance of the rights not merely of the negro but of the whites, in all other sections of the country,” by no means clearly appears. Explanation is wanted.

When and where has any Southern State unjustly seized any power or exercised any which is not clearly reserved to it in the Constitution ? The real trouble seems to be this :

After all the clamor against the slave power, so called, under the Constitution, before the war, growing out of the three-fifths basis of representation, it was found that, on the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, thirty-five representatives were thereby added to the South in Congress ; and that, so far from the three-fifths feature of the Constitution being an augmentation of the political power of the South, it was actually a diminution of that power to the extent of two fifths of their colored population. It was then that an attempt was made, by the Fourteenth Amendment, to deprive the Southern States of this increase of political power, which they by no means seized or attempted to seize, but which came to them rightfully under the Constitution. This attempt, as has been stated, failed of its object by the Southern States putting suffrage upon an equal footing between the blacks and whites.

Mr. Blaine says that the clear intent and express provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment have been evaded and violated by the Southern States.

Where is the proof to sustain this assertion? Is not the constitutional right of voting secured as amply to the colored people in the Southern States as in the Northern? If not, let proofs to the contrary be adduced. The question is not as to the wisdom of such policy, but as to the existence of the fact.

The public mind seems to be somewhat in a cloud upon this subject of representation, and the grounds upon which the colored population were rated in the Federal basis, as five blacks to three whites, or what is known as the three-fifths basis.

Before the war the idea seemed to be industriously inculcated in certain sections of the country that it was a grant to the South of property representation in their slaves. No greater error ever existed in the popular mind. This three-fifths principle was first agreed on in Congress under the old Articles of Union of the States, known as the first Constitution, in 1783. The history of it is this: There was not any power under the Constitution as it then existed to collect taxes by impost, or by any direct means; and the quota of each of the States was apportioned first upon land valuation in the respective States. This was found to work unjustly; and it was afterward determined that the best basis of taxation was population. But it was insisted that the black population was not so efficient in the production of wealth, which should be the criterion in taxation, as the white; and it would be unjust to make the basis of the quota of each State upon its population, without considering the character of its population. Some maintained that one white man's labor was more productive than that of four blacks; some three; some two. It was eventually agreed, on the motion of Mr. Madison, that three fifths should be the *ratio*, thus cutting off *two fifths* of the black population. This feature, thus originating in the Congress under the old Constitution, was incorporated into the new one, formed in 1787. It was then thought that the revenue would continue to be chiefly derived from direct taxation, as it had been under the old organization. This feature was thus retained at that time upon the principle that taxation and representation should go together. Very soon, however, the revenues were chiefly raised from imposts, and hence the Southern States for all practical purposes lost that power in legislation to which they would have been justly entitled upon the principle of representation in accordance with population.

After emancipation, in 1865, the two-fifths restriction ceased to exist, as a necessary result. The entire population of the Southern

States then entered into the count for apportionment, as well as the entire population of the North. The Southern States, therefore, came into the enjoyment of this increased political power not by seizure, but by constitutional right; and they can not be deprived of it except by a wrong not less atrocious than the most wanton and illegal seizure could be.

4. Mr. Blaine seems to maintain that it was the main object of the Fifteenth Amendment to secure the right of suffrage to the colored race.

To a great extent this may be granted as true; and yet, not to the extent which he would seem to argue. That amendment conferred no right of any kind. It was only intended to restrain the States and the United States from denying or abridging the right of suffrage on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The words are: "The rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any State, on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." This is but an additional covenant between the States, imposing restraints and obligations upon themselves, and of course takes its place alongside other similar constitutional provisions, restraining the power of the States. No State, under this provision of the Constitution, can make any discrimination as to the right of suffrage within its limits, "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude"; nor has any State, South or North, within the knowledge of the undersigned, made any such discrimination.

If there have been violations of the right of suffrage on the part of individuals by intimidation, force, violence, or bribery (which is by no means denied), the remedy under the Constitution is a plain one; and the undersigned believes that the remedy through the courts would be as strongly enforced in the South as in the North. In elections to Congress each House is the sole judge of the election and returns of its own members.

If a State were to pass a law making a discrimination, the State courts as well as the Federal courts would of course hold such a law to be unconstitutional. This prohibition against discrimination by any State in the matter of suffrage is analogous to the prohibitions against any State passing *ex post facto* laws or laws impairing the obligation of contracts, etc.

The remedy in all such cases is through the courts. The position of Mr. Blaine, that Congress, under its power of "appropriate legislation" to carry out all the provisions of the Constitution, can

take jurisdiction of this clause of the Constitution in any way different from what is proper in the other prohibitions against the States, can not be successfully maintained. The true remedy for all these evils, wherever they exist, North or South, is in the courts, under such laws as Congress may find it necessary to pass for the protection of rights, within its limited jurisdiction and specified powers.

ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.

MR. PHILLIPS.

NEGRO suffrage has not been a failure. Only the merest surface judgment would so consider it. Though his voting has been crippled and curtailed throughout a large part of the South during half the time he has been entitled to vote, the negro has given the best evidence of his fitness for suffrage by valuing it at its full worth. Every investigation of Southern fraud has shown him less purchasable than the white man. He has wielded his vote with as much honor and honesty—to claim the very least—as any class of Southern whites; even of those intellectually his superiors. For nine fearful years he has clung to the Republican party (which at least promised to protect him) as no white class, North or South, would have done. Want and starvation he has manfully defied, and asserted his rights till shot down in their very exercise. Where to-day is the Northern white class that would have clung to a party or a principle in such peril or at such sacrifice? If any man knows of such, let him testify. I have known Northern politics reasonably well for forty years, and my experience has shown me no such Northern politicians.

In law-making the negro has nothing to fear when compared with the whites. Taking away the laws which white cunning and hate have foisted into the statute-book, the legislation of the South since the rebellion may challenge comparison with that of any previous period. This is all due to the negro. The educated white Southerner skulked his responsibility. Either the negro himself devised those laws, or he was wise enough to seek and take the good advice of his friends. When some one told Sully that Elizabeth was not able, but only chose able advisers, "Is not that proof of the greatest wisdom?" said the sagacious minister of Henry IV. They say negro Legislatures doubled the taxes. Well, there were

double the number of children to be educated, and double the number of men (one half of them previously *things*) to be governed and cared for.

The South owes to negro labor and to legislation under negro rule all the prosperity she now enjoys—prosperity secured in spite of white ignorance and hate. The negro is to-day less ignorant, superstitious, and helpless than the same class of Southern white men ; yes, than a class of whites supposed to be immeasurably his superiors.

The South would not have disfranchised the negro if his suffrage had been a failure. Its success is what she fears and hates. When lawless and violent men attack any element of law and civilization, and can only succeed by destroying it, does not that very assault prove the value and efficiency of that obstacle to their lawless purpose ?

Negro suffrage gave the helm to the Republican party when it represented a principle—that was intelligent. It stood firmer against bribery than other Southerners—that was honest. It vindicated the negro's fitness for legislation—that scattered the fogs about negro inferiority. It educated the negro more and more every day, and was fast bringing him to a level with the whites of the best class—that was death to Southern dreams of future rule and treason.

In those States where either circumstances or the nation have secured the negro anything like fair play, his suffrage has been a marked success.

If negro suffrage has been in any particular or respect a failure, it has not been the negro's fault, nor in consequence of any want or lack in him. If it has failed to secure all the good it might have produced, this has been because of cowardice, selfishness, and want of statesmanship on the part of the Government of the United States. While squabbling over the loaves and fishes of office, we have allowed our only friends and allies to face the fearful dangers of their situation—into which we called them in order to save the Union—without the protection of public opinion, or of the arm of the Government itself. We have believed every lie against them ; fraternized with unrepentant rebels ; and on the Senate floor clasped hands dripping with the negro's blood—blood shed because, without sympathy or support from us, the negro wielded his vote so bravely and intelligently as to make the enemies of the Union tremble. Does any man imagine that Senator

Hamburg Butler shoots negro voters because he fears they will not rule South Carolina intelligently !

Negro suffrage has not, therefore, been a failure, even in any trivial degree, from any lack of courage, intelligence, or honesty on his part. And let it be remembered how early the Ku-klux assaulted him ; how incessant have been the attacks upon him all these years ; how brave and unquailing has been his resistance. Let it be kept in mind also that, meanwhile, one half of the journals of these forty States have been against him ; and seven tenths of the Federal officers and the whole organized power of the white South. All this while the negro has accumulated property, risen in position, advanced marvelously in education, outrunning the white man in this race. He has proved himself equal to any post he has gained. On the floor of Congress the Southern white has more than once quailed before negro logic, sarcasm, and power of retort. Nothing has checked his progress or put him down but a hundred lawless armed men assailing, at midnight, single men unarmed and at disadvantage. And let it be also kept in mind that this same lawlessness has shut up courts, silenced white Republicans, scattered their conventions, suppressed journals, and driven merchants from Southern cities ; so that yielding to it argues no cowardice in the negro, since the white of every profession, class, and grade shares in the same humiliation.

Does any man advise the disfranchisement of the white Republican because his voting is (to quote Mr. Blaine's picture) "a challenge to the Democrats in which he is sure to be overmatched, and his disfranchisement would remove all conflict and restore kindly relations between the two political parties" !

These considerations show the negro's fitness for the vote, and therefore that he ought to have been enfranchised.

Every consideration of policy and statesmanship demanded his enfranchisement, the negro being the nation's only ally in an enemy's country. Everything, therefore, that helps him strengthens the Union. Equality of condition breeds self-respect. Responsibility is God's method of educating men, making them sagacious, prudent, calm and brave. Power insures consideration to its possessor. When a vote in the House of Commons added half a million to the number of British voters, Lord John Russell sprang to his feet and exclaimed, "*Now* the first anxiety of every Englishman is to educate the masses !" It was their having the vote, and so endangering the state, which awakened that anxiety.

Then, again, while the negro remained without the suffrage it was a logical inconsistency under our Constitution. The popular mind frets at any such inconsistency. It was such intellectual and moral fretting against a logical inconsistency—slavery—that provoked the antislavery movement and gave it strength. To have prolonged such a state of things after the war ended would have been sure to have stirred angry debate. It was therefore wise and necessary to avoid this danger. Finally, the exercise of suffrage is the only sufficient preparation for it. You might as well postpone going into water until one has learned to swim, as to put off granting suffrage until all the world agrees that a man is fit for it.

When the North, therefore, gave the negro the vote it did all law could do to close the war between two civilizations, the barbarism of the South and the industrial and equal civil polity of the North. Of course this was the highest wisdom as well as simple justice.

After the negro has used his vote as honestly and intelligently as the average Northerner, and more bravely, shall we withdraw it because the caste prejudice, that hates him and dreads it, lives “unharmoniously” in its sight? And surely it would be absurd and a foul disgrace to take it from him for the single reason that this present Administration of our Government can not protect him in its exercise! Would you break up a good locomotive merely because one raw and blundering engineer proved himself incapable of running it?

Every man sees now what very few saw ten years ago (and I am glad I was one of those few, ridiculed as we then were), that to enfranchise the negro, without doing all the nation could to insure his independence, was a wrong to him and disastrous to us.

Treason should have been punished by confiscating its landed property. We all see now that magnanimity went as far as it safely could when it granted the traitor his life. His land should have been taken from him; and, before Andrew Johnson’s treachery, every traitor would have been only too glad to have been let off so easily: that land should have been divided among the negroes, forty acres to each family, and tools—poor pay for the unpaid toil of six generations on that very soil. Mere emancipation without any compensation to the victim was pitiful atonement for ages of wrong. Planted on his own land, sure of bread—instead of being merely a wages-slave—the negro’s suffrage would have been a very different experiment.

Then, again, those States should have been held as Territories (which United States authority could enter and rule directly, and without troublesome questions), until a different mood of mind among the whites, and the immigration of Northern men, wealth, and ideas, made it safe to trust that section with State governments. In his last years, the late Vice-President, Henry Wilson, confessed to me that this was the great mistake in that national settlement. His only excuse was, that the Republican party did not dare to risk any other course in the face of Democratic opposition—which only means that the nation was not ready for the statesmanship the time demanded. But this surely was not the negro's fault, and he should neither be blamed, nor visited with disfranchisement, because we were unready, cowardly, and incompetent.

But there is no need even now of bating one jot of hope. The United States Government is amply able to protect its own citizens. Put a man into the Executive chair, and there will be peace at the South—not, as now, the despot's peace, when "order reigns in Warsaw"—but quiet homes, streets free from bloodshed, and each man safe and unmolested while he exercises all a citizen's rights.

Mr. Blaine has made it clear that no right in this country is more completely guaranteed than the negro's right to vote. It is hard to imagine any eclipse of public honor so dark as to make his disfranchisement possible. But men who have seen the Dred Scott decision and slave-hunts in Northern cities—defended and welcomed by journals and pulpits—who have seen Webster bow his majestic fame, and Clay try to barter his early good record for infamous success—may well hesitate to say that any baseness or sycophancy, in a matter touching the negro, is impossible. The South will probably never, by law, disfranchise the negro while she remains in the Union. But the South does not (practically) disfranchise him now from petty spite. It is a well-matured plan. She purposes to rule this nation or break it. In her present mood union between her and the North is as impossible as between Germany and France, or Austria and Italy. Until Northern men, capital, and ideas, permeate the South, that mood will perpetuate itself.

But right is stronger than wrong. Barbarism melts and crumbles before civilization. The South can build no wall high enough, she can enact no law bitter enough, to bar out the nineteenth century. Even isolated Cuba has no tariff rigid enough to keep out justice. The Indian, with right on his side, and so alert that he

makes it cost the United States one million of dollars to kill an Indian in war, can not resist the wave of civilization. Equally impotent is the South. Whether under our flag, or outside of it, she will, in time, recognize the laws of industrial civilization, and accept justice as a good bargain, long before she is virtuous enough to see its righteousness.

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

MR. BLAIR.

THE negro ought to have been given the franchise if capable by nature of exercising it. If not, it ought not to have been conferred, and ought to be withdrawn. Hence the two questions presented are but one in substance. It ought to surprise no one that this question is likely to occupy the public attention again. The subject of the abolition of slavery occupied the public mind during many years, and was thoroughly discussed before it was acted upon ; and no one now denies the wisdom of the decision made upon it. But the question of negro suffrage was discussed very little before the people prior to its decision ; and neither the Congress which proposed nor the Legislatures which adopted the amendment were elected with reference to the question. And this is equally true of the Congress which passed the reconstruction act, by which negro suffrage was imposed upon the Confederate States, and by which the adoption of both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments was secured.

It is certainly proper for the people to reconsider a measure adopted so precipitately for the purpose of enabling one section of the country to hold the other in subjection, in violation of the Constitution and of the fundamental principle of local self-government, and which has never had the sanction even of the Northern people in any form (for the power to accomplish it was obtained from them by denying that any such action was contemplated).

Having been accomplished according to the forms of law, it is the Constitution, and can only be revoked by observing the same forms ; but if negro suffrage is pernicious to the public welfare, degrades suffrage, fosters corruption, defeats responsibility, strengthens the money power, and endangers the liberty of the race which established representative government, and so far alone has shown

capacity to maintain it, that capacity itself gives absolute assurance that it will be revoked.

Nor will it be long before the subject may be properly considered. The escape of the Southern States from the thralldom which negro suffrage was devised to impose upon them has defeated the object for which it was devised, and its authors now find that, instead of being an instrument to perpetuate their power, it serves only to increase that of their adversaries. They still clamor about outrages upon it ; but this is only to arouse the jealousy of the North to consolidate it against the power they have strengthened at the South. If defeated in this, the sectional issue will be eliminated from our politics, and the subject of negro suffrage will cease to have any relation to sectional power and national politics, and will probably be allowed to be considered upon its merits by the communities affected by it. In that event, the only advocates of negro suffrage will be the representatives of the planters and other possessors of wealth, who will control their labor and their votes. They alone will have any political interest to promote by maintaining it.

Our fathers, North and South, were all emancipationists, and refused to put the word "slave" in the Constitution, not wishing a trace of it to appear in that instrument ; but not a man among them contemplated making the negro a voter. Mr. Jefferson, who predicted that slavery would go out in blood unless provision was made for emancipation, saw also that the races could not live together as equals. "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate," he said, "than that these people are to be free ; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, can not live in the same government. *Nature*, habit, opinion, have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation, and in such slow degree as that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be filled up, *pari passu*, by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to *force* itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up." Prior to the war, Jefferson was the recognized exponent of the true principles of our Government, in theory and practice. He had extinguished the opposing party, and every succeeding Administration professed to be guided by his principles. And his counsel would have been followed with respect to slavery, as it had been upon other important subjects, but that a new prophet arose in the South, who, by firing the hearts of its politicians with a fatal ambition in

connection with it, so changed the *morale* of Jefferson's party as to make slavery its most powerful element, and his teachings on the subject to be pronounced "folly and delusion"; and slavery, instead of being "a moral and political evil," as he had taught, and as hitherto universally held at the South, became "the most safe and stable basis for free government in the world." We know the result.

Is there any better reason for accepting the new revelation, declaring it to be "folly and delusion" to say that *Nature* has drawn such indelible lines of distinction between the black and white races that they can not live as equals in the same government, *if that government is to be a free government?* It was inspired by the lust of sectional power, and relies for success upon the triumph of military over civil institutions. It was established by the sword, in violation of the Constitution. More than half the white people were disfranchised, and all their leading men, and the blacks, numbering 4,000,000, were given more votes than the whites, numbering about 8,000,000—the official returns of registration in nine of the States giving the blacks 631,746 votes, and the whites 585,769. General Grant, under whose direction the work was done, reported that the combined negro vote was indispensable; that the negroes were incapable of making that combination of themselves; and that the whites sent there from the North to direct that combination could not remain there for that purpose unless supported by the army. The military became the governing power. The part of the negro was that of "dummy" in the game. They were beaten at all points without regard to numbers, except where the military and United States deputy-marshals took charge and voted them. Negro suffrage has, in fact, never existed. It has been only an expensive process of registering and supervision by the military to have pieces of paper put in their hands and deposited as directed by the white men sent down to combine and lead them.

These were, necessarily, persons of the worst class; and the result was the most disgraceful chapter in our history. The votes of the blacks, which made the Republican candidate President, installed these harpies in the government of the States; they loaded the States with \$200,000,000 of debt, while exacting the most exorbitant taxes from the impoverished people, and gave entire immunity to crime. The demoralization thus infused into our system infected the Federal Government. The enormous expenditure during Grant's two terms—being, exclusive of all payments growing out of the war,

greater than the expenditure from 1789 to 1861, including that on account of the war of 1812, the Algerine war, the Mexican war, all our Indian wars, and the purchase money of Louisiana and Florida—is traceable to the irresponsible government thus established. And so is the corruption which has pervaded the Government, not yet fully exposed, but which the whisky ring, the Indian ring, and the multitude of similar blotches accidentally brought to the surface show to have permeated all departments.

The British Government learned from the American Revolution what, in their eagerness for power, our Republican politicians lost sight of—that it was “neither possible nor desirable” to govern the English-speaking race against their will. And hence, instead of suppressing representative government in Canada after the rebellion, as our rulers did in the South, Earl Grey, in his instructions to Lord Elgin, the Governor-General, said that “it could not be too distinctly understood that it is neither possible nor desirable to carry on the government of any of the British Provinces in North America in opposition to the opinion of its inhabitants.” To shame the great Republic and to foment discord in it, the blacks in Jamaica were also enfranchised to elect a Parliament, while all the workingmen in England were denied that privilege; but the incapacity of the negro for that function was so fully demonstrated that it had to be withdrawn. This fact ought to silence those among us who, for mere party objects, have lately echoed the ruling class in England in attributing the universal repugnance of our people, North and South, before the war, to mere pride of race. Having tried the experiment themselves where there was no race conflict, and found it a lamentable failure, they have themselves vindicated the wisdom of our fathers and the good sense of our people.

Many honest and true men have been persuaded that it was necessary to give the ballot to the negro to secure him his freedom. They assumed that he could acquire the knowledge and *character* which qualified him to use it. Knowledge sufficient he might acquire, but not the independence and the self-reliance. It was for want of these qualities that he was for centuries an hereditary bondman in America, and did not himself strike the blow which made him free. Indeed, all the acts passed to make him a voter, from the reconstruction to the enforcement act, and all the speeches of their advocates, recognize his want of every essential quality of a voter by treating him as not fit to be the master but only to be the ward of the Government. On this theory the Freedman's Bu-

reau was established to remove him from the influence of the white race, General Grant empowered to sustain the men sent to mass them against the white people, and for this reason it is assumed that the Republicans can not be legally beaten where the negroes are in the majority. The Republicans knew that the race which takes so largely the direction of public affairs of this continent would control the negro unless the Government interposed to prevent it. And the recovery of political power in all the Southern States, in spite of this interposition, shows that he is more feeble than he was accounted.

And the fact that Wade Hampton had five thousand blacks, uniformed with red shirts, marching in procession during his canvass for Governor in 1876, received all the votes for that office in 1878, and all but two for Senator in 1879, will satisfy any mind open to the truth that this is not due to intimidation.

Hampton is the type of a class to whom the negro naturally gives fealty; and enfranchisement will, for a time at least, be a grant of vast political power to them when the Northern politicians shall discontinue the attempt to use him as the instrument of their power, and make it possible for the local politicians to avail themselves of his aid. Hampton, the boldest of this class, long ago avowed his pleasure at the grant, and has availed himself of it. Others will soon follow his example.

As it is manifest that, as followers of this class, the negro can be better protected than as the instrument of Northern dominion over the people of the South, it ought to be the policy of all who have any true feeling for him to discountenance the new crusade which the Northern politicians are preparing to preach in 1880. But while under the guidance of a class of leaders who are responsible to public opinion, they could be trained, if it were possible to train them at all, to the exercise of government, no such result can be expected. It would be as reasonable to expect them to develop wings by training. The negro is not a self-governing nature. He is of the tropics, where, as Montesquieu observes, despotism has prevailed in all ages. His *nature*, of which this form of Government is the outgrowth, is not changed by transplanting, more than that of the orange or the banana. Hence to incorporate him in our system is to subvert it. His nominal enfranchisement is but a mode of disfranchising the white man, and makes them equals indeed, but only as the subjects of irresponsible power. For this reason Mr. Jefferson believed it would not be submitted to. We have seen

that he understood the American people better than Mr. Calhoun. It remains to be seen whether he knew them better than Mr. Thaddeus Stevens.

MONTGOMERY BLAIR.

MR. HENDRICKS.

THE editor of "The North American Review" has asked me to express some views upon Mr. Blaine's article on the questions, "Ought the Negro to be disfranchised? Ought he to have been enfranchised?" and also my views upon the questions themselves. It is almost impossible for me to comply with this request. I am in Washington for a few days only, and my engagements will not allow me to attempt a review of Mr. Blaine's article. Upon the two questions I can only express my opinions, without much argument or illustration.

It is not yet ten years since the right to vote was conferred upon the negro by constitutional provision. That period is too short to allow such test of the wisdom of the measure as would justify its abrogation. The constitutional amendment is supposed to have been the deliberate and well-considered act of the people. It must not be regarded as an ordinary legislative measure, to be repealed or modified "for light and transient causes." To make such a change of the Constitution because an election in one section of the country has not resulted as some might have desired or expected, is to treat the most solemn act of the people with contempt, and to weaken the force and impair the authority of the Constitution itself. Opposition to negro enfranchisement ten years ago does not now require an effort to strike the Fifteenth Amendment from the Constitution. Any provision of the Constitution should be regarded as fixed and permanent, and not to be disturbed, except upon the test of such experience as would justify a change of Government itself, because of great and permanent evils. It was not reasonable to suppose that the two races would at once and without discord adjust themselves to the new relations prescribed and fixed by the constitutional amendments. In the establishment of civil and political changes so radical and extended, strife and discord for a time were inevitable.

The experiment by which the negro is now being judged has not been a fair one. When enfranchised, he was made to feel that

he owed servitude to a party ; through the agency of United States officials and of the Freedmen's Bureau, and by means of secret leagues, the entire negro vote was consolidated into a party inspired by a distrust of, if not hostility to the white race. The color line was distinctly drawn. They were taught to distrust every suggestion made by their former masters for their political welfare, and to give their utmost confidence and support to a class of men who most unscrupulously used the power so acquired to promote their own selfish ends. The result was the introduction in many Southern States of the most objectionable practices. Bribery and corruption fastened themselves upon the public service. The State governments became the worst possible. The increase of State indebtedness was frightful. Taxation threatened to swallow up not only the earnings but also the accumulations of the people. Men contemplated approaching ruin with horror. Judged by these results, negro enfranchisement was worse than a failure, it was a gigantic evil.

In that condition of the country, excesses and abuses did unquestionably occur. No foresight, no patience, no policy could have averted them. The fierceness of the struggle for better government was necessarily proportioned to the enormities that were practiced upon the people. The efforts of the people to promote their own welfare soon passed from personal conflict, and neighborhood struggle, to the adoption of measures and policies of safety and reform. The colored people were appealed to. They were told that their own welfare, as well as that of the white race, required economy and reform ; that the value of the products of their labor depended upon measures that would reduce taxation. These appeals were heard and heeded. In great numbers, by their influence and their votes, they contributed to the changes in men and measures that experience has shown were essential to the welfare of all classes, especially of producers.

Perhaps in this connection it is proper to refer to the State of South Carolina as an illustration. Next to that of Louisiana, her government was the worst, and the condition of her people the most intolerable. Her present able chief Executive, in his canvass for the office, addressed the colored voters in the language of argument and of patriotic appeal. He and his cause proved stronger than party control. They came to his support. They contributed to his election. Without their help, no change could have occurred. The reform that followed was complete. The men who had ruled

and ruined the State, and who had oppressed all her industries, met their just punishment in prison, or sought safety in flight. Honesty took the place of fraud, and economy displaced profligate expenditure. Judged by such results, negro enfranchisement is not altogether a failure. The results in Georgia are equally instructive. The evil influences that controlled the negro vote in other localities were never so strong in that State ; and at an earlier day legitimate and good authority prevailed. A beautiful illustration of the harmony that has come to exist between the races occurred in one of the cities of that State but a week since. The negro vote had contributed to the election of an able Representative in Congress. He died, and, when his remains were taken home for interment, they who had helped to elect helped also to bury him. They appeared in the funeral procession in organized companies of the militia, in full uniform, and carrying the arms of the State. At the polls and at the grave the races united in the expression of confidence, and in tributes of respect toward one whose family was connected with the history of the State. It is a pleasing reflection that when thus restored to its proper condition society has become relieved, in a great degree, of the strife and bloodshed that attended the government of the people of the States by outside power.

It is but recently that we have heard the demand for the withdrawal of the right to vote from the negro, and for a reduction of the representation allowed to the Southern States. The demand comes only from those who relied upon their power to control him as a political machine. It can not be said that his late independent action in harmony with that of the white people is wrong. Beyond dispute, it was well for all the people of South Carolina, both white and black, and for the people of the whole country, that Governor Hampton was successful, and that the corrupt power was overthrown. Peace is assured. Labor is secure and encouraged. Calmly, quietly, and intelligently a large body of the negroes have joined the whites to correct intolerable evils. This was fully and well stated by a late colored United States Senator from Mississippi, in a letter written to the President shortly after the bad government had been overthrown in that State. The "Solid South" is the result of the union and harmony of the races, and of their united effort for economy and reform.

I am not able to see why the subject of negro suffrage should be discussed. It must be known to all that the late amendments will not be, can not be, repealed. There is but the duty upon all to

make the political power now held by the enfranchised race the cause of the least evil, and of the greatest possible good, to the country. The negro is now free, and is the equal of the white man in respect to his civil and political rights. He must now make his own contest for position and power. By his own conduct and success he will be judged. It will be unfortunate for him if he shall rely upon political sympathy for position, rather than upon duties well and intelligently discharged. Everywhere the white race should help him, but his reliance must mainly be upon himself.

THOMAS A. HENDRICKS.

Conclusion.—MR. BLAINE.

AT the instance of the Editor of the "North American Review," and not by request or desire of mine, the brief article which I wrote in regard to negro suffrage was submitted to the gentlemen who have replied to it, and in turn their articles have been submitted to me. I have now the privilege of rejoinder, and the whole series of papers thus assumes the phase of a connected discussion.

With the exception of Mr. Wendell Phillips and General Garfield, the replies are from gentlemen identified with the Democratic party, and distinguished and influential in its councils. General Garfield is a Republican, and has taken prominent and honorable part in all the legislation respecting negro suffrage. His views are so entirely in harmony with my own that nothing is left me but to commend his admirable statement of the case. Mr. Phillips is neither a Republican nor a Democrat, but reserves to himself the right—a right most freely exercised—to criticise and condemn either party with unsparing severity, generally bestowing his most caustic denunciation upon the party to which he most inclines. It is by this sign that we feel occasionally comforted with the reflection that Mr. Phillips still has sympathies with the Republican party, and still indulges aspirations for its ultimate success.

The arraignment of the Republicans at this late day by Mr. Phillips, because they did not reduce the Confederate States to Territories and govern them by direct exercise of Federal power, is causeless and unjust; and it can not certainly influence the judgment of any man whose memory goes back to 1866-'67. For I assume that if anything, not capable of demonstration, is yet an

absolute certainty, it is that such an attempt by the Republican party would have led to its utter overthrow at the initial point of its reconstruction policy. The overthrow of the Republican party at that time would have restored the Confederate States to full power in the Union without the imposition of a single condition, without the exaction of a single guarantee. All the inestimable provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment would have been lost : its broad and comprehensive basis of citizenship ; its clause regulating representation in Congress and coercing the States into granting suffrage to the negro ; its guarantee of the validity of the war debt of the Union and of pensions to its soldiers and their widows and orphans ; its inhibition of any tax by General or State Government for debts incurred in aid of the rebellion or for the emancipation of any slave ! These great achievements for liberty, in addition to the Fifteenth Amendment, would have been put to hazard and probably lost, could Mr. Phillips have had his way, in a vain struggle to reduce eleven States—four of them belonging to the original thirteen—to the condition of Territories ; thus committing the General Government to a policy as arbitrary and as sure to lead to corruption and tyranny as the proconsular system of Rome.

And as if the territorial policy were not enough to have destroyed the Republican party at that time, Mr. Phillips would have plunged us into the wild, visionary, and unconstitutional scheme of confiscating the land of the rebels and giving it to the freedmen. Confiscation laws were passed by Congress during the hottest period of the war ; but even then, when passions were at the highest, no enactment was proposed which did not recognize the express limitation of the Constitution that in punishing treason there should be no "forfeiture except during the life of the person attainted." The Republican party has been flippantly accused by its opponents of disregarding the Constitution, but I venture to say that there is no parallel in the world to so strict an observance of written law during a critical and mighty war as was shown by the Republicans throughout the protracted and bloody struggle that involved the fate of free government on this continent. It is impossible, therefore, that the Republican party could have adopted the policy which Mr. Phillips commends ; and impossible that it could have succeeded if the attempt had been made.

Of the replies made by the other gentlemen, identified as they have been and are with the Democratic party, it is noteworthy that, with the exception of Mr. Blair, they agree that the negro ought

not to be disfranchised. As all of these gentlemen were hostile to the enfranchisement of the race, their present position must be taken as a great step forward, and as an attestation of the wisdom and courage of the Republican party at the time they were violently opposing its measures. This general expression leaves Mr. Blair to be treated as an exception, and for many of his averments the best answer is to be found in the suggestions and concessions of his Democratic associates. I need not make an elaborate reply to Mr. Blair, when he is answered with such significance and such point by those of his own political household. It is one of the curious developments of political history that a man who sat in the cabinet of Abraham Lincoln and was present when Emancipation was decreed should live to write a paper against the enfranchisement of the negro, when the Vice-President of the Rebel Confederacy and two of its most distinguished officers, are taking the other side !

Of Governor Hampton's paper it is fair to say that it seems to have been written to cover a case ; its theory and application being adapted to the latitude of South Carolina, and to his own political course. Mr. Hampton is a man of strong parts, possessing courage and executive force, but he has been in the thick of the fight, and has had personal ambitions to gratify which may not place him in history as an impartial witness. His personality protrudes at every point, and his conception of what should be done and what should be undone at the South is precisely what is included in his own career. When Mirabeau was describing all the great qualities that should distinguish a popular leader, the keenest of French wits said he "had forgotten to add that he should be pock-marked."

Mr. Lamar offers a contrast to Governor Hampton. He generalizes and philosophizes with great ability, and presents the strange combination of a "refined speculatist," and a trustful optimist—embodying some of the characteristics of Mr. Calhoun whom he devoutly followed, and of Mr. Seward, whom he always opposed. Mr. Lamar is the only man in public life who can be praised in New England for a warm eulogy of Charles Sumner, and immediately afterward elected to the Senate as the representative of the white-line Democrats of Mississippi. And yet, inconsistent as these positions are, it is the dream of Mr. Lamar's life to reconcile them. He is intensely devoted to the South ; he has generous aspirations for the Union of the States ; he is shackled with the narrowing dogma

of State rights, and yet withal has boundless hopes for an imperial republic whose power shall lead and direct the civilization of the world. Hedged in by opposing theories, embarrassed by forces that seem irreconcilable, Mr. Lamar, probably more than any other man of the Democratic party, gives anxious and inquiring thought to the future.

Of Mr. Stephens and Mr. Hendricks it may be said that in their treatment of the question, one aims to vindicate the course of his native Georgia ; the other to gain some advantage for the Democratic party of the nation. Mr. Stephens has the mind of a metaphysician, led astray sometimes in his logic and sometimes in his facts, but aiming always to promote the interest of the State to which he is devoted. Mr. Hendricks is an accomplished political leader, with large experience, possessed of tact and address, and instinctively viewing every public question from its relation to the fate and fortune of his party. Mr. Stephens argues from the standpoint of Georgia ; Mr. Hendricks has in view the Democracy of the nation.

These Democratic leaders unite in upholding the suffrage of the negro under existing circumstances, but each with an obvious feeling that some contradiction is to be reconciled, some record to be amended, some consistency to be vindicated. They all unite, however, on the common ground of denouncing the men who controlled the negro vote at the outset in the interest of the Republican party ; and the underlying conclusion, not expressed but implied, is that if the military force had been absent and the persuasion of the Freedmen's Bureau had not been applied, the negroes would have flocked, as doves to their windows, to the outstretched and protecting arms of the Democratic party. This seems to me to be sheer recklessness of assumption ; the very bravado of argument. Why should the negro have been disposed to vote with the Democratic party ? Mr. Hendricks says he was made to feel that "he owed servitude to a party through the agency of United States officials and the Freedmen's Bureau." But can Mr. Hendricks give any possible reason why the negro should have voted with the Democratic party at that time ? Does not the record of Mr. Hendricks himself as the leader of the Democratic party in the Senate show the most conclusive reasons why the negro should have voted with the Republicans ?

Mr. Hendricks argued and voted in the Senate against emancipating the negro from helpless slavery ; when made free, Mr. Hendricks argued and voted against making him a citizen ; citizenship

conferred, Mr. Hendricks argued and voted against bestowing suffrage ; and he argued and voted against conferring upon the negro the most ordinary civil rights, even inveighing in the Senate against giving to colored men who were eligible to seats in Congress the simple privilege of a seat in the horse-cars of Washington in common with white men. Conceding to the negro the ordinary instincts and prejudices of human nature, it must have required the combined and energetic action of the United States army, the Federal officers, and the Freedmen's Bureau, to hold him back from his impulsive and irrepressible desire to vote with Mr. Hendricks and the Democratic party !

I do not use this *argumentum ad hominem* in any personal or offensive sense toward Mr. Hendricks. His position was not different from his associates and his followers in the Democratic party on all the questions where I have referred to his votes and his speeches. Mr. Lamar occupied the same ground practically, and so did Mr. Stephens and Governor Hampton. Indeed, the entire Democratic party opposed legislation for the amelioration of the negro's condition at every step, and opposed it not with the mere registry of negative votes, but with an energetic hostility that too often assumed the phase of anger and acrimony. Emancipation from slavery, grant of citizenship and civil rights, conferring of suffrage, were all carried for the negro by the Republicans against a protesting and resisting Democracy. Democratic Senators and Representatives in Congress fought all these measures with unflagging zeal. In State Legislatures, on the stump, in the partisan press, through all the agencies that influence and direct public opinion, the Democrats showed implacable hostility to each and every step that was taken toward elevating the negro to a better condition. So that it was inevitable that the negro who had sense enough to feel that he was free, who had perception enough to know that he was a citizen, who had pride enough to realize that he was a voter, felt and knew and realized that these great enfranchisements had been conferred upon him by the persistent energy of the Republican party, and in spite of the efforts of an embittered and united Democracy. Is further statement necessary to explain why the negro should have cast his vote for the Republican party when a free ballot was in his hands ? It can be readily understood why he may now cast a vote for the Democratic party when he is no longer allowed freedom of choice, when he is no longer master of his own ballot.

It must be borne in mind that the Republicans were urged and

hastened to measures of amelioration for the negro by very dangerous developments in the Southern States looking to his reënslavement, in fact if not in form. The year that followed the accession of Andrew Johnson to the Presidency was full of anxiety and of warning to all the lovers of justice, to all who hoped for "a more perfect Union" of the States. In nearly every one of the Confederate States the white inhabitants assumed that they were to be restored to the Union with their State governments precisely as they were when they seceded in 1861, and that the organic change created by the Thirteenth Amendment might be practically set aside by State legislation. In this belief they exhibited their policy toward the negro. Considering all the circumstances, it would be hard to find in history a more causeless and cruel oppression of a whole race than was embodied in the legislation of those revived and unreconstructed State governments. Their membership was composed wholly of the "ruling class," as they termed it, and in no small degree of Confederate officers below the rank of brigadier-general, who sat in the Legislature in the very uniforms which had distinguished them as enemies of the Union upon the battle-field. Limited space forbids my transcribing the black code wherewith they loaded their statute-books. In Mr. Lamar's State the negroes were forbidden, under very severe penalties, "to keep firearms of any kind"; they were apprenticed, if minors, to labor; preference being given by the statute to their "former owners." Grown men and women were compelled to let their labor by contract, the decision of whose terms was wholly in the hands of the whites; and those who failed to contract were to be seized as "vagrants," heavily fined, and their labor sold by the sheriff at public outcry to the highest bidder. The terms "master" and "mistress" continually recur in the statutes, and the slavery that was thus instituted was a far more degrading, merciless, and mercenary type than that which was blotted out by the Thirteenth Amendment.

South Carolina, whose moderation and justice are so highly praised by Governor Hampton, enacted a code still more cruel than that I have quoted from Mississippi. Firearms were forbidden to the negro, and any violation of the statute was punished by "a fine equal to twice the value of the weapon so unlawfully kept," and, "if that be not immediately paid, by corporeal punishment." It was further provided that "no person of color shall pursue or practice the art, trade, or business of an artisan, mechanic, or shopkeeper, or any other trade or employment (besides that of husbandry or that

of a servant under contract for labor), until he shall have obtained a license from the Judge of the District Court, which license shall be good for one year only." If the license was granted to the negro to be a shopkeeper or peddler, he was compelled to pay one hundred dollars per annum for it, and if he pursued the rudest mechanical calling he could do so only by the payment of a license fee of ten dollars per annum. No such fees were exacted of the whites, and no such fee of free blacks during the era of slavery. The negro was thus hedged in on all sides ; he was down and he was to be kept down, and the chivalric race that denied him a fair and honest competition in the humblest mechanical pursuits were loud in their assertions of his inferiority and his incompetency.

But it was reserved for Louisiana to outdo both South Carolina and Mississippi in this horrible legislation. In that State all agricultural laborers were compelled to make labor contracts during the first ten days of January, for the next year. The contract once made, the laborer was not to be allowed to leave his place of employment during the year except upon conditions not likely to happen and easily prevented. The master was allowed to make deductions of the servants' wages for "injuries done to animals and agricultural implements committed to his care," thus making the negroes responsible for wear and tear. Deductions were to be made for "bad or negligent work," the master being the judge. For every act of "disobedience" a fine of one dollar was imposed on the offender ; disobedience being a technical term made to include, besides "neglect of duty," and "leaving home without permission," such fearful offenses as "impudence," or "swearing," or "indecent language in the presence of the employer, his family, or agent," or "quarreling or fighting with one another." The master or his agent might assail every ear with profaneness aimed at the negro men, and outrage every sentiment of decency in the foul language addressed to the negro women ; but if one of the helpless creatures, goaded to resistance and crazed under tyranny, should answer back with impudence, or should relieve his mind with an oath, or retort indecency upon indecency, he did so at the cost to himself of one dollar for every outburst. The "agent" referred to in the statute is the well-known overseer of the cotton region, and the care with which the law-makers of Louisiana provided that his delicate ears and sensitive nerves should not be offended with an oath or an indecent word from a negro will be appreciated by all who have heard the crack of the whip on a Southern plantation.

It is impossible to quote all the hideous provisions of these statutes, under whose operation the negro would have relapsed gradually and surely into actual and admitted slavery. Kindred legislation was attempted in a large majority of the Confederate States, and it is not uncharitable or illogical to assume that the ultimate reënslavement of the race was the fixed design of those who framed the laws, and of those who attempted to enforce them.

I am not speculating as to what would have been done or might have been done in the Southern States if the National Government had not intervened. I have quoted what actually was done by Legislatures under the control of Southern Democrats, and I am only recalling history when I say that those outrages against human nature were upheld by the Democratic party of the country. All the Democrats whose articles I am reviewing were in various degrees, active or passive, principal or endorser, parties to this legislation ; and the fixed determination of the Republican party to thwart it and destroy it called down upon its head all the anathemas of Democratic wrath. But it was just at that point in our history when the Republican party was compelled to decide whether the emancipated slave should be protected by national power or handed over to his late master to be dealt with in the spirit of the enactments I have quoted.

To restore the Union on a safe foundation, to reëstablish law and promote order, to insure justice and equal rights to all, the Republican party was forced to its Reconstruction policy. To hesitate in its adoption was to invite and confirm the statutes of wrong and cruelty to which I have referred. The first step taken was to submit the Fourteenth Amendment, giving citizenship and civil rights to the negro, and forbidding that he be counted in the basis of representation unless he should be reckoned among the voters. The Southern States could have been readily readmitted to all their powers and privileges in the Union by accepting the Fourteenth Amendment, and negro suffrage would not have been forced upon them. The gradual and conservative method of training the negroes for franchise, as suggested and approved by Governor Hampton, had many advocates among Republicans in the North ; and, though in my judgment it would have proved delusive and impracticable, it was quite within the power of the South to secure its adoption or at least its trial.

But the States lately in insurrection rejected the Fourteenth Amendment with apparent scorn and defiance. In the Legislatures

of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida, it did not receive a single vote ; in South Carolina only one vote ; in Virginia only one ; in Texas five votes ; in Arkansas two votes ; in Alabama ten ; in North Carolina eleven ; and in Georgia, where Mr. Stephens boasts that they gave the negro suffrage in advance of the Fifteenth Amendment, only two votes could be found in favor of making the negro even a citizen. It would have been more candid in Mr. Stephens if he had stated that it was the Legislature assembled under the Reconstruction Act that gave suffrage to the negro in Georgia, and that the unreconstructed Legislature, which had his endorsement and sympathies, and which elected him to the United States Senate, not only refused suffrage to the negro, but loaded him with grievous disabilities, and passed a criminal code of barbarous severity for his punishment.

It is necessary to a clear apprehension of the needful facts in this discussion to remember events in the proper order of time. The Fourteenth Amendment was submitted to the States June 13, 1866. In the autumn of that year, or very early in 1867, the Legislatures of all the insurrectionary States except Tennessee had rejected it. Thus and then the question was forced upon us, whether the Congress of the United States, composed wholly of men who had been loyal to the Government, or the Legislatures of the Rebel States, composed wholly of men who had been disloyal to the Government, should determine the basis on which their relations to the Union should be resumed. In such a crisis the Republican party could not hesitate : to halt, indeed, would have been an abandonment of the principles on which the war had been fought ; to surrender to the rebel Legislatures would have been cowardly desertion of its loyal friends, and a base betrayal of the Union cause.

And thus, in March, 1867, after and because of the rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment by Southern Legislatures, Congress passed the Reconstruction Act. This was the origin of negro suffrage. The Southern whites knowingly and willfully brought it upon themselves. The Reconstruction Act would never have been demanded had the Southern States accepted the Fourteenth Amendment in good faith. But that amendment contained so many provisions demanded by considerations of great national policy, that its adoption became an absolute necessity. Those who controlled the Federal Government would have been recreant to their plainest duty, had they permitted the power of these States to be wielded by disloyal hands against the measures deemed essential to the security

of the Union. To have destroyed the rebellion on the battle-field, and then permit it to seize the power of eleven States and cry check on all changes in the organic law necessary to prevent future rebellions, would have been a weak and wicked conclusion to the grandest contest ever waged for human rights and for constitutional liberty.

Negro suffrage being thus made a necessity by the obduracy of those who were in control of the South, it became a subsequent necessity to adopt the Fifteenth Amendment. Nothing could have been more despicable than to use the negroes to secure the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment, and then leave them exposed to the hazard of losing suffrage whenever those who had attempted to reënslave them should regain political power in their States. Hence the Fifteenth Amendment—which never pretended to guarantee universal suffrage, but simply forbade that any man should lose his vote because he had once been a slave, or because his face might be black, or because his remote ancestors came from Africa.

It is matter of sincere congratulation that, after all the contests of the past thirteen years, four eminent leaders of the Democratic party should unite in approving negro suffrage. It will not, I trust, be considered cynical, certainly not offensive, if I venture to suggest that this Democratic harmony on the Republican side of a long contest has been developed just at the time when many causes have conspired to render negro suffrage in the South powerless against the Democratic party. Even in districts where the negro vote is four to one, compared with the whites, the Democrats readily elect the Representatives to Congress. I do not recall any warm approval of negro suffrage by a Democratic leader so long as the negro was able to elect one of his own race or a white Republican. But when his numbers have been overborne by violence, when his white friends have been driven into exile, when murder has been just frequent enough to intimidate the voting majority, and when negro suffrage as a political power has been destroyed, we find leading minds in the Democratic party applauding and upholding it. So lately as February 19, 1872, years after negro suffrage was adopted and while it was still a power in the Southern States, such influential and prominent Democrats as Mr. Bayard, of Delaware, and Mr. Beck, of Kentucky, united in an official report to Congress, wherein they declared, regarding negro suffrage, that "there can be no permanent partition of power nor any peaceable joint exercise of power among such discordant bodies of men. *One or the other*

must have all or none. . . . Pseudo-philanthropists," continued Mr. Bayard and Mr. Beck, "may talk never so loudly about 'equality before the law,' where equality is not found in the great natural law of race ordained by the Creator." Mr. Beck and Mr. Bayard made this report when fresh from protracted intercourse with Southern Democratic leaders, and it will not be denied that in their expressions they fully represented the opinions of their party at that time. Will it be offensive, if I again ask, what has changed the views of Democrats except the overthrow of free suffrage? So long as the negro can furnish thirty-five Representatives and thirty-five Electors to the South, his suffrage will be upheld in name, and so long as the Democratic party is dominant it will be destroyed in fact.

Mr. Hendricks is a conspicuous convert. The negro is washed and made white in his eyes as soon as he votes the Democratic ticket. He is greatly affected by the fact that negroes "helped to bury a Democratic Congressman whom they had helped to elect." In this simple incident Mr. Hendricks finds great evidence of restored kindness between the races. Was there ever a time when the colored people refused to show respect to the whites, living or dead? The evidence would have been stronger if an instance had been quoted of white men paying respect to a deceased negro. But, unhappily, if funeral incidents are to be cited, Mr. Hendricks will find more than he cares to quote. Almost at the moment of his writing, testimony was given before a Senate Committee in Louisiana not only of the murder of two negroes for the sin of being Republicans, but of their being left without sepulture, and actually devoured by hogs on the highway! Their remains—the phrase is doubly significant in this case—were finally covered with earth by some negro women, the negro men having all fled from their white persecutors.

Mr. Hendricks's high praise of the governments of South Carolina and Louisiana, since they fell under Democratic control, is not justified by the facts. Where he speaks of Republicans connected with the government of South Carolina "meeting their punishment in prison and seeking their safety in flight," he provokes an easy retort. One of these men, an ex-Congressman, was sent to prison on disgracefully insufficient evidence, the Judge delivering a bitter partisan harangue when he charged the jury to convict. Governor Hampton, to his credit be it said, pardoned him, and it would have been still more to his credit had he pardoned him more promptly. In another case the Executive of a great Commonwealth

refused Governor Hampton's requisition, on the ground that the man was not wanted for the cause and the crime alleged. These criminal charges have in many cases borne the appearance of mere political persecutions, in which the victims are not the persons most dishonored.

On the other hand, when South Carolinians by the hundred were indicted for interfering with the freedom of elections in killing negroes by the score, it was found impossible to convict one of them. Against the clearest and most overwhelming evidence, these murderers were allowed to go free, and the prosecutions were abandoned. South Carolina courts appear to be "organized to convict" when a Republican is on trial, and South Carolina juries impaneled to acquit when Democrats are charged with crime.

In the opinion of Mr. Hendricks, Louisiana under Republican control was the very worst of all the Southern governments. A change was made in April, 1877, and since then the Democratic party has held undisputed power in that State. When the Republicans surrendered the State there was a surplus of \$300,000 in its treasury; taxes were collected, credit maintained, and interest on its public securities promptly and faithfully paid. To-day, after twenty-one months of Democratic government, according to public and undenied report, the State is bankrupt; its taxes uncollected; its treasury empty; nearly half a million overdrawn on its fiscal agent; the interest on its public debt unpaid, and its most sacred obligations protested and dishonored. Had such decadence happened in a State under Republican rule—succeeding a prosperous Democratic administration—the denunciations of Mr. Hendricks might have been fittingly applied.

My conclusions on the topic under discussion are:

First. Slavery having been constitutionally abolished by the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment, the question of suffrage was unsettled. But it may be safely affirmed that the Republicans had no original design of interfering with the control which the States had always exercised on that question.

Second. The loyal men who had conducted the war to a victorious end were not willing that those who had rebelled against the Union should come back with political power vastly increased beyond that which they had wielded in the days of pro-slavery domination; and hence they proposed the Fourteenth Amendment, practically basing representation in Congress upon the voting population—the same for North and South.

Third. Instead of accepting the Fourteenth Amendment, the insurrectionary States scornfully rejected it, and claimed the right to settle for themselves the terms on which they would resume relations with the Union. And they forthwith proceeded to nullify the Thirteenth Amendment by adopting a series of black laws which remanded the negro to a worse servitude than that from which he had been emancipated.

Fourth. When the Government, administered by loyal hands, found it impossible to secure the necessary guarantees for future safety from the "ruling" or rebel class of the South, they demanded and enforced a Reconstruction in which loyalty should assert its rights. Hence the negro was admitted to suffrage.

Fifth. The negro having aided by loyal votes in securing the great guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment, the Republicans declared that he should not afterward be deprived of suffrage on account of race or color. Hence the Fifteenth Amendment.

Sixth. So long as the negro vote was effective in the South in defeating the Democracy, the leaders of that party denounced and opposed it. They withdraw their opposition just at the moment when, by fraud, intimidation, violence, and murder, free suffrage on the part of the negro in the South is fatally impaired; by which I mean that the negro is not allowed to vote freely where his vote can defeat and elect. As a minority voter in Democratic districts he is not disturbed.

Seventh. The answer so often made, that, compared with the whole number of Congressional districts in the South, only a small number are disturbed, is not apposite, and does not convey the truth. For it is only in the districts where the negroes make a strong and united effort that violence is needed, and there it is generally found. Thus it is said that only in a comparatively few parishes of Louisiana was there any disturbance at the late election. But the Democrats contrived to have a disturbance at the points where it was necessary to overcome a large Republican vote, and of course had none where there was no resistance. It will generally be found that the violence occurs in the districts where the Republicans have a rightful majority.

Eighth. As the matter stands, all violence in the South inures to the benefit of one political party. And that party is counting upon its accession to power and its rule over the country for a series of years by reason of the great number of electoral votes which it wrongfully gains. Financial credit, commercial enterprises, manu-

facturing industries, may all possibly pass under the control of the Democratic party by reason of its unlawful seizure of political power in the South. Our institutions have been tried by the fiery test of war, and have survived. It remains to be seen whether the attempt to govern the country by the power of a "Solid South," unlawfully consolidated, can be successful.

No thoughtful man can consider these questions without deep concern. The mighty power of a republic of fifty millions of people—with a continent for their possession—can only be wielded permanently by being wielded honestly. In a fair and generous struggle for partisan power let us not forget those issues and those ends which are above party. Organized wrong will ultimately be met by organized resistance. The sensitive and dangerous point is in the casting and the counting of free ballots. Impartial suffrage is our theory. It must become our practice. Any party of American citizens can bear to be defeated. No party of American citizens will bear to be defrauded. The men who are interested in a dishonest count are units. The men who are interested in an honest count are millions. I wish to speak for the millions of all political parties, and in their name to declare that the Republic must be strong enough, and shall be strong enough, to protect the weakest of its citizens in all their rights. To this simple and sublime principle let us, in the lofty language of Burke, "attest the retiring generations, let us attest the advancing generations, between which, as a link in the great chain of eternal order, we stand!"

JAMES G. BLAINE.